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ART. I.—REFORMED SYNODS.

THE restoration of the Reformed, or—as it is commonly called—Presbyterian Church polity, is by many attributed to Calvin. This is correct only in part. The honor of having materially aided in its development belongs, no doubt, to him, but the first movement in that direction, and the first partial success in its restoration, belongs to Zwingli. Dr. Paul Henry, in his extensive and learned Life of Calvin, admits, that “the direction which Calvin took as a reformer, in matters of discipline, was that pointed out by Zwingli, and the opposite of that pursued by Luther.”*

Our present inquiry has reference to the rise and history of Synods and other ecclesiastical judicatories in the Reformed Church.

The first Synod in the Reformed sense, growing out of the new order developed by the Reformation, was, beyond doubt, the one held at Berne, Feb. 18th, 1528, six days after the close of the Disputation of Berne, when the ten Theses were signed. It was called with a view “to ascertain the sentiments of the congregations, through their delegates, with regard to the Reformation.” Whether this was designed to be the first of a series of permanent and regular Synods does not appear, but this is most likely. On account of disturbances which broke out in the Highlands, 1528, and also the religious wars of 1529 and 1531, what is usually called the first Synod of Berne did not meet till the 9th of January, 1532, continuing till the 14th.

* Vol. I., p. 387.

It was composed of the clergy of the canton, two hundred and thirty in number. The proceedings are extant, and are said to be model records of an ecclesiastical assembly; not mere dry details of business, but breathing a cordial and fraternal spirit, full of evangelical unction and a deep Christian life and love.

Meanwhile, in the same year, 1528, in which the first special Synod was held in Berne, Zwingli instituted in Zurich regular semi-annual Synods. These, however, were not instituted by the congregations of the Canton, but were called and managed by the Civil Council; they were, therefore, not independent of the civil authority. Two presidents, elected by the ministers, presided over these Synods, one of whom was chosen from the lesser or greater Council; the other from the lesser Council only. The members of the Synod were all ministers, except that, including the lay presidents, there were nine members of the government.

These Synods were created for this purpose, namely: "That all the ministers of the Church might confer and take action, before nine members of the Council, in regard to such matters pertaining to ministers and the churches as necessity required, to the praise of God and the protection and advancement of His word, in order that any offences might be avoided or removed." Not only were the ministers permitted to present any case on which they wished counsel or redress before the Synod; but also the members, "if they had any matter of complaint or charge against the ministers on account of doctrine or life," could also appear, through one or two reputable men, whom the Council itself would appoint for that purpose. The most important business transacted in this Synod, says Gœbel, was the careful examination of each one of the pastors as to their doctrine and mode of life, and the mutual brotherly admonitions based on such examination. *Correctio mutua.** These Synods, after the mode of Zurich, were

* "Zwingli's sketch of his Church polity appeared (after his death) in 1582, in the preacher's ordinance of the Superintendent, Bullinger, at Zurich. It was laid before a Synod, consisting of pastors, preachers, and two representatives of the congregation. The subjects considered were, first, the choice, appointment and ordination of ministers; secondly, their doctrine and

also introduced soon after in all the Highland provinces, in Basel, Strasburg, and through Berne, in the arch-bishopric of Cologne, and in East Friesland.*

These Synods, though subject to the civil authority, yet conducting their deliberations in the presence of the members of the government, still exercised a very decided influence upon the State in political matters. And though there was no lay representation in the office of Elders, still "every individual member of the Church had also a certain degree of influence on its affairs through this, that the congregation was allowed to express its opinion respecting the chosen preachers."†

As already said, there was in these Synods no direct lay representation from the churches, nor did Zwingli restore the office of Elder in the congregations; yet from him originated a movement which eventuated in the restoration of this office. "In the year 1526," says Dr. Henry in his Life of Calvin, "a foundation was laid, through the marriage ordinance, for the stability of the Church (in Zurich). According to this decree, from two to four pious men were allowed to every minister as assistants. They were to see that the laws of marriage were strictly observed, to warn the quarrelsome and litigious, and, in case of necessity, to consign such persons to the magistrate to be punished. This regulation prevailed in the towns as well as in the country. Thence arose the establishment of officers, to whom was entrusted the oversight of morals and church discipline. These persons were allowed to inflict even a certain mea-

life; and thirdly, the assembling of Synods." *Henry's Life of Calvin*, Vol. I, p. 368. Thus plainly with him originated the restoration of government by Synods.

* Gobbel's *Geschichte des christlichen Lebens in der rheinisch-westphälischen evangelischen Kirche*. Vol. I, 291. This is a most important contribution to the early history of the Reformed Church. It not only goes to the sources, in congregational and synodical records, but it presents also many features of Church life, as it unfolded itself in doctrine, government, cultus, and customs, which are overlooked in our general histories. It covers, in two volumes, together, 1358 pages. No one, who can read German, ought to be without it. Most of the facts in this article pertaining to the continental Reformed Synods, have been derived from this work.

† *Dr. Henry's Life of Calvin*. Vol. I, p. 368, 369.

sure of punishment, when warnings and admonitions did not avail, by exacting fines, imposing penances more or less degrading, and even by excluding the offender from the Lord's Table." How plainly did this point to the restoration of the office of Elder, to which it also led—though first under the hand of Calvin at Geneva in 1537.

Whilst Zwingli stopped short of reaching the full idea of the presbyterian element in ecclesiastical government in not restoring the Elder office, Calvin fell below him in failing to include in his polity the true position and power of Synods. In his system, 1537—1541, the ministers had not at first a body over them in the form of a Synod with ultimate power. They had only weekly assemblies among themselves (colloques, Coetus) which were distinct from the Consistories, and had for their object the preservation of the purity and unity of doctrine among them. They assembled also quarterly for the purpose of mutual exhortation. The weekly assemblies were a kind of pastoral conferences, while those held quarterly were something like Synod's for the furtherance of spiritual discipline. In connection with these there belonged to the same system also annual church visitations to every congregation, performed by a committee of two ministers and two members of the Council.

Moreover, the office of Elder in Geneva, contrary to Calvin's principle, did not attain its true primitive position. "They were not chosen from the congregation, but from the Council, thereby constituting a regular aristocracy as in the State itself;" and besides this, "the number of lay members by far exceeded that of the clergy, so that the latter could not fail to find themselves overpowered,—a source of frequent anarchy." Calvin himself, however, opposed the introduction of a double number of laymen to the ministers in the assembly, regarding it as improper and evil, that the laity should have the power of outvoting the clergy. Thus it will appear, that the true idea of the presbyterian theory of government was far from being realized in the system of Calvin. Indeed excepting the formal in-

troduction of Elders, it was scarcely any advance on what before existed in Zurich, Strasburg, Cologne, and other places where it was formed after the Zwinglian model, whilst, in failing to create a synodical council with general authority over individual pastors and churches, it fell far short of attaining the same stability and power.

A system of Church government, after the model of that in Zurich, was in operation in Strasburg as early as 1581, consequently long before the appearance of Calvin. It was in the form of an ecclesiastical convention, composed of all the ministers, together with twenty-one lay members from the churches. These last were to have an oversight of the lives and official conduct of the ministers, in important cases to counsel with the clergy in regard to church affairs, and in general to assist faithfully in the advancement of all that pertained to church and religion. Three at a time, with the minister, held alternately weekly meetings, or presbyterial sessions. The same system was also introduced in the Cologne reformation. The apostolic office of Deacons was here restored. The system included also annual church visitations like those afterwards introduced by Calvin. Conferences were also held weekly, as well as semi-annual district and general, or diocesan synods, for the mutual instruction and exhortation of pastors : "It is our will, and we demand it, that the pastors diligently and regularly attend the Synods and all necessary exercises, seeking ever farther to improve themselves in the proper knowledge and practice of their duties."

This system of Church government gained great influence in Northern Germany. This may be judged from the fact that, when in 1545, de Lasky began to introduce the presbyterial polity in Emden, he took the ecclesiastical arrangements of the Cologne reformation as his model.

It is due to Calvin to remember that his own mind had advanced to a much more true and full idea of the presbyterian system of Church government than he was able at that time to carry out into practical effect. This his Institutes will show. Dr. Henry, his biographer, has correctly

remarked : " Calvin departed probably from the right principles propounded in the Institutes, only because driven to a different course by the obstinate viciousness of the people. His spirit should be contemplated in his works, rather than in his doings. He has displayed his moral judgment so admirably in a theoretical point of view, that no Christian can find any thing to object to it. But there were rocks lying on the path of the real world. His ideas as a reformer were better developed in France."

In 1555 a pious nobleman fled with his family to Paris. He declared one day in a secret assembly of many pious persons who lived in that city, that he could not have his child baptized "according to the idolatrous ceremonies," and proposed the election of an evangelical minister. After fasting and prayer, they elected a young minister who had just come from Geneva, and immediately instituted a consistory of Elders and Deacons. This was the origin of the French Reformed Church. The already existing congregations throughout France joined themselves with this Church in Paris, and with wonderful rapidity the Reformed Church spread from place to place through the kingdom. So great was the number of members in France quietly organized under the presbyterian form of government, that four years later, 1559, "they were able to hold a general Synod at Paris, and exhibited their views of discipline in forty articles. In successive Synods these first principles were further developed, till at length the law book of the French Church was perfected. It contains, in the last edition, fourteen chapters, and two hundred and twenty-two articles." The system of Church polity which they thus established was altogether after the model of Calvin's, though an advance of it, and it developed itself in a way more free and realized the presbyterian form of government more truly than had ever before been done. It was independent of the State. Each congregation was governed by a consistory of Elders and Deacons, holding their office for life. This consistory elected the minister, but the congregation had the power of veto. The congregations were

united first in Classes, which met four times a year; these in district Synods, which met twice a year; and finally all in a general Synod, which met once a year. Through Classes and the general Synod, the Church governed itself by deputies, providing for all the expenses of its government, paying its ministers and officers, and all the expenses of the delegates to and from their ecclesiastical assemblies. The general or national Synod, had unlimited and final power. Appeal could be made to it from consistories or provincial synods. The Classes were composed of the ministers of a given district, each one accompanied by one or two lay presbyters, who were elected by the consistories as the representatives of the people. The general Synod was composed, not of delegates from the Classes, but like the Classes themselves, of ministers and Elders from all the congregations. The President of the general Synod was chosen by a plurality of votes, with no other power but to preside over the proceedings. Ministers and Elders were on an equality in the Synod, except that an Elder could not be chosen President.

It is worthy of note that Calvin was in favor of the appointment of a permanent President, in Judicatories, and that the office should always exist in some distinguished member of the Church. In accordance with this view, he remained permanent President of the consistory. In these views he was opposed by Beza, who wished the office to be held by a regular succession of new occupants. "In the first Synod, held in Paris," says Dr. Henry, "a protest was characteristically made against a permanent Moderator, and in the very first article adopted." The object of this was to guard against the creeping in of any hierarchical elements, or any thing that might develop itself in that direction. This was in advance of Calvin, who, besides desiring the office of President to be permanent, "recommended in fact the episcopal element for the larger and more important countries." "He proposed a form of Church government to Sigismund, King of Poland, in which he combined, in a certain sense, the episcopal with

the presbyterian element." "Casaubon declares in a conversation with Uytenbogaret, that Calvin had become bishop of Geneva. Mr. de Beza had said to him, that Mr. Calvin, who had rejected episcopacy, was in fact bishop of Geneva, and that a little before his death, he had proposed to Mr. Beza to make him his successor, but that the latter had refused the offer."^{*} In his letter to Sigismund, dated 1544, Calvin says : "The ancient Church introduced the patriarchate, and gave each province its primate, that by this bond of peace and union the bishops[†] might be more fully held together ; as if in the present day an archbishop should be appointed President in the renowned Kingdom of Poland, not to rule over the rest, or to invade their rights, but who, to preserve order, should possess the first rank in the Synods, and strive to preserve a holy union among his official brethren. Bishops also might be appointed for the provinces and for the cities, on whom the responsibility should peculiarly rest of preserving order. The natural course of things directs that one should be chosen from the rest to take the chief management of affairs ; but it is a very different thing for a man to be satisfied with a moderate degree of honor, according to the proper measure of human capacity, to his wishing to embrace the whole world in his boundless sway." From his holding the parity of the ministry, and saying that the dignity of which he speaks should be "chosen from the rest" of "his official brethren"—and from his idea that his honor of position should be based on and "be according to the proper measure of human capability"—as well as from his view "that the office of President should always exist in some distinguished minister of the Church," we see plainly that the episcopal arrangement which he proposed to

* Dr. Henry's Life of Calvin. Vol. I, p. 401.

† By which he means the ministry, not an order above presbyters. He held the parity of the ministry. "I call bishops and presbyters, without distinction, servants of the Church. The Scriptures recognize no other servants of God but the preachers of the Word, called to govern the Church, and whom they sometimes name bishops, sometimes elders, or pastors." Quoted in Henry's Life of Calvin. Vol. I, p. 371.

Sigismund, and considered proper "for the larger and more important countries," as a means of unity, rested on no doctrine of the divine right of episcopacy. Rather he thought only of one made chief by equals, who should be "a bond of peace and union," and would be such because his elevation to such position rested in the confidence of his equals whose voice elevated him. His primate was nothing but that of a President, whose office he desired to be permanent, having certain power between sessions. For this reason he desired that this position should always be awarded to "some distinguished member of the Church."

Calvin saw a disadvantage in concentrating the ruling power once a year or oftener in a Church judicatory, and then having it dissolved in the interim, and hence sought to remedy this apparent defect by a permanent President, embodying the powers of the Synod between its sessions. But he did not so clearly see, or perhaps adequately consider, the danger of such sacred power being concentrated in one man, and that to be held for life, especially after he denied the divine right of such office in a president or bishop, or by whatever other title designated. By favoring the form of episcopacy as a judicious convenience, and yet denying the divine right of Bishops, he invited all the dangers connected with it, without claiming that divine right, without which it cannot possibly prove an advantage in the way of peace and union. He did not see that the perfection of the Presbyterian system of Church government, in a Synod with its lower judicatories, made the acts of the Synod, in substance, the acts of a bishop—thus establishing a general power over the individual as a bond of peace and union, whilst the provision whereby a Synod might be assembled in any case of need, actually gave the Synod a permanent existence, and made it possible to invoke its help in any case of grave concern. Whilst there was in the Synod no danger of hasty or of too much government—a common evil—it furnished, at the same time, a permanent centre of power and bond of peace. All

who bear the ruling power by virtue of ecclesiastical office, and not a single one—the Synod, not its President—this constituted the ultimate power. The Synod is the bishop.

Thus only in restoring the office of Elder, and in so far as this pertains to the Presbyterian system of Church government, did Calvin restore this system of ecclesiastical polity. As regards its perfection in the wider idea of syndical councils, he not only did nothing to favor it, but his influence was strongly operative against its early realization.

Interesting is the establishment of Synods among the "Churches sitting under the cross," in Holland and Westphalia, made up of refugees from France, the Netherlands, the Palatinate, and other places. These Churches held their first Synod secretly at Teux in 1563. The first general Synod of the Churches of the Netherlands was held at Antwerp, 1566, most largely composed of Belgian Churches; at which time the Belgic confession of faith was improved and formally adopted. But alas! the next year, 1567, this Netherland Church, in consequence of the invasion of the Duke of Alba, was again scattered, and the pilgrim Churches sought a home in Western Germany and some in England. Yet, "as chastened, and not killed ; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing : as poor, yet making many rich : as having nothing, and yet possessing all things," their faith, and hope, and worship grew and flourished in the lands of their exile. By thousands they took up their abode in the towns and cities along the Rhine, from the Palatinate to Wesel, and Emden, and became the immediate occasion of the firm establishment of the Rhine-Westphalian Reformed Church.

Wesel, the largest city in the district bearing that name, and situated near where the Lippe empties into the Rhine, received the evangelical doctrines early in the Reformation. Above the gate toward Cleves they caused to be cut in stone the beautiful and significant words: "I STAND OPEN TO THE PIous." No wonder that such an invitation should be welcomed by the homeless refugees. Many entered

that city; and here these persecuted Churches, drawn together by a Christian spirit and the pressure of their woes, held their second Synod, 1568. Their proceedings were conducted in the Latin language. The decisions of this Synod were then finally adopted and brought into full force by the general Synod of the Churches of the Netherlands "which sit under the cross and are scattered through Germany and East Friesland," assembled at Emden, a large and beautiful sea-port town on the Ems, in East Friesland, 1571. This Synod became thus in time the permanent basis of the national Church of the Palatinate as well as of Holland.

The so-called Synod of Wesel, 1568, was not, in the full sense of that term, a Synod—rather a kind of preparatory conference, without the authority of making final decisions. The object of it was to prepare a form of Church government embodying the principles of the best Reformed Churches, which should then be laid before a regular and legal Synod of all the Belgian Churches for correction and final adoption. The Churches in the Rhine lands were not represented in that Synod. It included only about twenty Netherland congregations, represented by forty-six ministers and elders, to the decisions of which, however, seven others who were absent, afterwards attached themselves. Peter Dathenus, Court preacher of Frederick III,—who had been sent by that Prince to promote the order and advance the interests of the Netherland congregations along the lower Rhine, and if he could not prevent the holding of this Synod, at least influence its counsels—was President. The most important, and, at the same time, the most difficult matter to be accomplished by this convention was to reconcile and unite the Zwinglio de Laskian views and customs with those of the Calvinistic Walloon churches, as they existed together in the Netherlands, in relation to doctrine, government, and cultus. Hence, in order "to prevent all tyranny of conscience and strife," the Synod, with great wisdom, passed as its first resolution, "that the congregations should be perfectly free in all such

non-essential matters as are not distinctly found in the teachings and precedents of the Apostles, or are not in themselves necessary and unavoidable." But in more important matters, there shall be no hasty departure from the general views and customs of the Church as they then existed.*

The end sought by this assembly was well attained. A full system of government was wrought out; and its excellence, and its accordance with the general sense of the Reformed genius and spirit, is best attested by the fact, that with some emendations it was adopted, as we have already indicated, by the general or national Synod of the Netherlands at Emden, 1571.

The conclusions of the conference of Wesel in regard to Church government, were based chiefly on the form of government introduced in London by de Lasky; but care was taken as far as possible to harmonize the system with that of Geneva. However, in order as little as possible to come in conflict with the native Churches of Germany, it was distinctly declared, that the Synod did not wish to reflect upon any other Church by their decisions, but that they had only prayerfully sought to have reference to the circumstances and wants of the Belgic Churches; and that they had so arranged their system, that, as time and circumstances should make it necessary, it could be altered and amended, so as to accommodate itself to the relations of Church and State as well as to the farther development and spread of the Church.†

In agreement with the Church government of Geneva, Cologne, and that of de Lasky in London, the Conference of Wesel designated four classes of officers in the Church: Ministers of the Word and Sacraments; Doctors or Teachers (*Lehrer oder Propheten*) to which Zwingli also refers; Elders; and lastly Deacons—these last of two kinds, Deacons and Deaconesses. Their views of these officers are thus given by Gœbel.

* Gœbel's *Geschichte des Christlichen Lebens, &c.* Vol. I, p. 409, 410.

† Gœbel's *Geschichte, &c.* Vol. I, 410.

1. The Synod held, that the *ideal* of the election of a minister is, that it be done mutually by the Elders of the Church and the civil officers, and that the congregation might be satisfied with their selection. But as this ideal could scarcely be attained, they held that the Synod should coöperate with the Elders in such election ; but as long as even this could not be carried out in order "to avoid an improper lordship of the Elders over the people," it should be the duty of the Elders to propose to the congregations a double number of the needed ministers—thus, in this respect, to proceed not according to de Lasky's German, but after the manner of Pollannis' French pilgrim congregation of London. In new, or not yet properly organized churches, neighboring congregations shall assist. The examination of a minister shall be conducted by ministers, or it may also be done by elders only. It shall be to ascertain whether he agrees in all points with the Belgic confession and with the Genevan or Heidelberg Catechism. He shall be ordained by his colleague or by a neighboring minister, in which he shall be pledged to the system of Church government.

2. The board of Doctors or Teachers (Das Lehrer- oder Propheten-Collegium) shall, once or twice a week, in connection with prayer, publicly explain the Holy Scriptures in regular order. To constitute this board there shall be selected not only the ministers, but such of the elders and deacons, and also from the congregation, as may be qualified. These shall also be called into counsel whenever points of doctrine come up in the consistory.

3. The Elders or Presbyters, with the ministers, constitute the church council or consistory. Their office requires them to watch over the souls of the members, to visit the sick, to labor in the way of general supervision, exhortation and the exercise of discipline. To enable them well to do their work, it is necessary to divide the congregation into parishes, in each of which an Elder shall reside and labor. The election, examination, and ordination of Elders and Deacons is the same as that of ministers. The

Elders can hold no council without the presence of the minister, except in pressing exigencies, and they shall carefully avoid all lust for power. A presbyterian-protocol shall be carefully kept.

4. The Deacons hold the alms, and have the special care of the poor and sick. In places where it appears suitable and necessary, elderly women of tried faith and life, may be called into service as Deaconesses.

Inasmuch as the Elders and Deacons, if true to their calling and duties, had necessarily to employ much of their time, which had thus to be lost to their private interests, it was directed that, for the relief of such as could not afford the sacrifice of time, annually or semi-annually there should be a change of one half the members, by appointment of others in their places.

No minister is allowed to leave his charge without permission of his congregation and the Synod. Only the minister shall baptize; and this sacrament shall be administered publicly in the congregation; except in cases where congregations are just forming, in tenderness to the weak, it may be administered in the family, yet not without the presence of a small congregation of four or five believers. Before the administration of the Lord's Supper, the Elders shall visit the members in their several parishes. No one can commune who has not first professed the articles of faith, and submitted himself to the rules of discipline in the Church. Adults to be received as members must be examined by the minister and elders, but not publicly. Children, however, it will not be inappropriate to examine publicly—both must submit themselves to the discipline. In all congregations the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated with the breaking of common leavened bread, and not with wafers.

The public confession of sin may be made in a free way, or according to the form of Geneva, or of some other Reformed Church. The prayer after the sermon shall be a free prayer. Before the service begins, an Elder or a Deacon shall read a chapter from the Holy Scripture—so that

there may be no temptation to engage in idle conversation in the Church—a custom which originated in the Swiss French Reformed Churches, and is yet customary amongst them. In singing, only the Psalms (of Dathenus) shall be used, and as far as possible only the the Goudimel tunes shall be sung.

Care shall be taken that no congregation is organized which is not based on this form of government. For purposes of discipline, and also that proper watch may be had over the moral conduct of the ministers, there shall be a meeting of the Synod (Classis) at least quarterly, and the provincial Synod shall meet semi-annually. These meetings shall not take place in any one location, but shall be adjourned from place to place, not only thereby to avoid all prominence or desire to rule, of one church over another, but also that in this way the condition and circumstances of the various congregations may be the better known and watched over.

Such was the system prospectively wrought out by the Synod of Wesel. It remained for the legally assembled general Synod at Emden, 1571, composed of a large number of representatives from very distant places, on the one hand, to examine this form of Church government and fully to confirm it, and on the other hand, actually to organize the Church on this foundation—to arrange its provinces, districts and congregations, and to order the weekly assemblies of the consistories, the quarterly or semi-annual meetings of the Classes, the annual meetings of the provincial Synods, as of Germany, England, and Belgium, and the convocation of the general Synod once every two years. The President of this Synod, as also of the following one held at Dort, 1574, was a minister from the Palatinate, Casper von der Heyden, pastor of the Dutch Church in Frankenthal.

The arrangements were all successfully made. The German Province was divided into four Classes, each one including a prominent place indicated by the name printed in capitals. 1. The Palatinate—composed of two con-

gregations in Frankfurt, one in Schönhofen, HEIDELBERG, Frankenthal and St. Lambert. 2. The Dukedom Zulich—including two congregations in COLOGNE, two in Achan, one in Maestricht, Limburg, Neusz, and some others. 3. Cleve—containing WESSEL, Emmerich, Goch, Rees, Geunep and others. 4. The pilgrim churches of EMDEN.

The Belgian Province “under the cross,” extended from Northern France to North Holland and West Friesland, and consisted of four Classes—Brabant, German Flanders, Welsh Flanders, and Holland,

The English Province was not yet arranged.

In these smaller Synods or Classes they first elected a President, then one preached a sermon, which was discussed by the rest. Then followed a careful visitation of the congregation, in the midst of which they had met. Then followed action on any business presented; discussion of such important points as were suggested by the President; and lastly the election of delegates to the Provincial Synod, a like number of ministers and elders. In the Provincial Synods they acted first on matters of Doctrine, second on Discipline, and then on Miscellaneous matters.* Such was the system of government which was inaugurated at the Synod of Emden, and which proved a great power for good in all the regions over which it extended then, and spread afterwards.

Whilst the pilgrim congregations in the bounds of the Palatinate, were thus brought under regular Presbyterian Classical and Synodical Church government, the same system made slow progress in the native churches of that principality after Frederick III. passed over into the Reformed Church, 1560, and published the Heidelberg Catechism, 1563. Olevianus could at first succeed no further than to effect the organization of Synods composed of ministers without elders. Congregations were still without elders, and the discipline was in the hands of the State. Still, after long and careful examination, Frederick yielded to

* See Göbel's *Gesch. des Christ. Lebens.* Vol. I, pp. 311-318.

the views and wishes of Olevianus, and in 1570, by his direction, but amidst strong opposition from the opposite party, presbyterial boards were instituted in all congregations, and the government and discipline of the Church explicitly entrusted to them. These presbyters, called from the chief feature of their calling, censors, were, however, not elected by the congregations, but appointed for life by the higher ecclesiastical authorities. Even this proved a decided blessing in the government of the churches, though it was far from the true ideal of the Presbyterian system.

As the Reformation progressed and native Reformed congregations were formed in the Rhine Provinces they became more and more united with the congregations of the refugee Churches, and during the period between the first Synod of Emden, 1571, and 1610, they together stood under the care of the General Belgian or Netherland synod. But the Reformation advanced in the interesting Rhine country, and after many reverses and trials endured by the Reformed on this battle ground of the faith, the set time for a general organization of the Reformed Churches in that region came.

In 1609 the government of these Provinces, which had for the last thirty years been strictly Roman Catholic, changed into hands favorable to the Reformation, in the persons of the Statthalters of Brandenburg and Pfaltz-Newburg, who began to rule under a union effected by Hessian intervention in 1609. In 1609, the same year in which he became ruler, the Statthalter, Margrave Ernst, of Brandenburg, received the holy communion in the Reformed church in Weesel, and under his protection and through his influence, the Reformed congregations in the three principalities of Julich, Cleve and Berg, were organized into a General Synod, 1610, in order by its care "to further these countries in the knowledge of the true religion for which a blessed door had been opened in the providence of God." To the General Synod of these three Provinces, a fourth Provincial Synod, that namely of Mark, was united in 1611. Thus was constituted a Synodical organization, including

four provincial Synods, which, from that time on, during a period of over two hundred years formed a firm and indissoluble bond of union for the Reformed Church in the lower Rhine Provinces. It endured firmly, especially during the first years, many fires of persecution, as in 1614, 1616, 1622, 1623, 1625, and so at a little longer intervals through the whole century.

This effected, Palsgrave Wolfgang William found occasion for dissatisfaction. In conscious opposition against this Reformed General Synod, he called in 1612, Lutheran General Synods in the four Provinces of Julich, Cleve, Mark, and Ravensburg, yet not at one place, but each one by itself, in Julich, Dinslaken, Unna, and Bielfeld. Thus was the division, which was hitherto not outwardly marked between the two evangelical confessions, effected and established for the following two centuries, till it began to yield again toward the end of the last century, when appear the beginnings of the Union formed by these Synods.*

The Reformed General Synod thus organized in the Rhine Provinces, held its meetings very regularly for two hundred years. The first four meetings were held some time apart, on account of tumultuous times—thus, 1610, 1611, 1619, 1622, 1633—but from this last date regularly.

This system of Church government in the Rhine Provinces was a most wise and perfect organization, realizing perhaps as nearly as may be the true ideal of what is called the Presbyterian idea; and it has been to the Reformed Church in all subsequent time, and in all countries, as a model. From its General Synod the power of government descended in beautiful gradation and attenuation through the Provincial Synods, and their subordinate Classes and Consistories, to the individual member—uniting, in a way that made all bondage impossible, the firmest authority with the very highest freedom—the freedom under law.

The congregation, or church, as they were wont to call

* Gœbel. Vol. II, pp. 20, 21.

it, was governed by the presbytery, or body of elders, with the pastor as president, at that time, as now in America, after the habit of the French churches, called the Consistory. The selection of Elders was always conducted in connection with prayer; the first time by the Inspector of Classis, and thus under its direction and with its consent, and in the presence of the most prominent members of the congregation—and afterwards, according to the custom of the congregation, generally by the Elders themselves, or also by the members of the congregation from a double number which had been nominated by the Elders. The Consistory met once, and in some cases twice a month. The Deacons stood under the Elders, and were elected in the same manner as the Elders themselves. The minister was elected either by the whole congregation or by its deputies, or, in some cases, by the Elders alone, who in this important matter called in those of the congregation who had previously served as Elders, and thus formed the "great council." The direction and consent of the Classis were always necessary—in many cases it nominated three, out of which the selection had to be made. In the large towns the civil authorities at first claimed the right of a voice in the election of pastors, but this was earnestly resisted by Classes and Synods, till at length, after much controversy, the General Synod in 1683 decided that selection belongs *juris divini* to the congregations, and steadfastly refused to examine and ordain any candidates who were not so elected.

The single congregation, with its consistory, was, however, not independent. "Presbyterianism," says Gœbel, "is the natural and deadly foe of Independency." Hence the congregation never appears as a self-existing whole, but only as a member and part of a higher unity in the General Synod, through Classis and the Provisional Synod. These sub-Synods, of which there were four, were each divided into three Classes or district Synods, as they were also sometimes called, to which each congregation sent one minister (even if it had more) and one elder. Through

these subordinate bodies the unity and the power rises, and becomes complete and final in the General Synod. Hence, at the close of the very first General Synod, it was decreed: "That no one shall be at liberty, in any way, to oppose or change anything which is here determined and decided, either in presbyterio, classico-conventu, or provinciali Synodo, unless it is first so resolved by the General Synod."* Hence, it was law, that the properly attested credentials which every minister and elder was required each time to bring from the Consistory, must distinctly declare that the congregation, Classis, or provincial Synod sending, submits itself beforehand to all the legal decisions that should be made. So strictly was this principle adhered to that a violation of it, or a refusal to submit to it, was followed by suspension or exclusion, be it minister or congregation. To the Provincial Synods of Cleve and Mark, their Classes always sent six delegates each, four ministers and two elders; whilst in the much more vigorous Classes under the Synods of Julich and Berg, the congregations "under the cross" held to their custom of sending a delegation from each congregation. This was not denied them; and in the fact, as Gœbel has well said, "we behold how freedom reigned with order, and unity in diversity, in the Reformed Church of the Rhine provinces." The General Synod, which met every three years, was constituted of six delegates from each of the four provincial Synods.

A representation of the Eldership in the Judicatories was positively required. If a minister appeared in Classis or Synod without his Elder, the congregation was censured, or the minister himself not admitted into the body. Only later, in 1750, some Synods made exceptions in favor of poor congregations, allowing them to send their minister alone. There appears no distinction between the ministers and elders, as to authority in all the synodical acts. They spoke of one another as "brethren-ministers," and "brethrenelders." The President was elected at each meeting of the body, and he held the office of

* Gœbel. Vol. II, p. 82.

Inspector till the next following meeting. As such he had the oversight of his Classis or Synod during his term—the representative of the Judicatory to the churches, by its authority and choice for the time being made chief among equals.

Since 1674 it has been the beautiful and excellent custom, on the Sabbath preceding the assembly of the Classes or Synods, in all the churches earnestly to offer up public prayer for divine assistance, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, in these councils of the Church.

A brief sketch of the manner in which business was conducted in the Synod belongs to our subject, and shall here be abridged from Gœbel. It was opened by the President of the previous year, by greeting the members, making a brief address, and offering prayer. Then the credentials of the delegates were handed in and read, new members received, the case of such as were absent, or who had come too late, disposed of and the representatives from other Synods to "keep up brotherly correspondence," recognized. Then a preparatory censura morum ratione eligibilitatis was held in order to ascertain whether any of the ministers present had in any way by his conduct rendered himself ineligible to the office of President. Gœbel says he has met with only two instances in which the eligibility of ministers was disputed,—and in 1670, when the Labadist Nethemis unsuccessfully disputed the eligibility of another, and in 1737, when the Elders of the Reformed congregation of Elberfeld opposed that of the grandfather of Schliermacher because he was under censure of the Presbytery on account of Ronsdorffian errors. This matter over, the election for President was held. The newly elected President offered prayer and made an address, in which he thanked the retiring President for his faithfulness and labor of love in his official position. Then the members of Synod all took the vow of loyal adherence to the doctrines of the word of God, as set forth in the Heidelberg Catechism, and pledged to one another "with mouth and hand" to continue in the truth by doctrine and life. Then began

the regular business of Synod, in which, according to a standing custom, all pastors present who were not delegates, were invited also to participate.

In the Classical meetings the same mutual vow and pledge was given at the beginning, after which inquiry was made of the deputies of the congregations as to the state of things among them, in regard to the preaching of the gospel, administration of the holy sacraments, holding of consistorial meetings, the exercise of church discipline, catechization, family visitation, visitation of the sick, care of the poor, supervision of the schools, and the life of ministers, elders, and members; whereupon, says Gœbel, the Protocols generally read: "that, God be praised, all these things are in a pretty good condition." Yet exceptions are also constantly recorded.

At the Provincial Synods, the first business was reading the minutes of the previous meeting, also those of the Classes, of the other three provincial Synods, and those of the General Synod, and all points requiring attention discussed and acted upon. These Synods generally continued three days. On the second day of the session the Synodical Sermon was preached, which service since 1662, was accompanied by the celebration of the Lord's Supper, in which all the members of Synod participated. The Synodical Sermon was less designed for the practical benefit of the hearers than for the examination of the ministers; on this account one of the younger or newer members was appointed to preach the sermon, which was afterwards made the subject of a discussion, before the Synod by ministers and elders, and thus became the occasion for examining points of doctrine, which not only served to try the preacher's orthodoxy, but also indirectly served to benefit all the ministers who engaged in or listened to the discussion. Finally, under the head of "Imposita," Synod took up the election of delegates to corresponding bodies, delegates to the General Synod, the synodical preacher, the place of next meeting, the reception of such candidates as had been examined by the Classes, the appointing of the Inspectors

named by the Classes. Then such requests and complaints as may have been sent in from civil officers and councils, were considered under the title "Gravamina." Then came censura morum, if action in this matter was not, as was generally done, "for this time omitted and sent back to the Classes." Under this head each minister and elder was examined, as well in regard to his life in general, as also his conduct during Synod, receiving a brotherly exhortation and warning, "The brethren also mutually exhorted one another to greater love and meekness." Finally, as "Annexa" follow financial settlements, the concluding prayer, dismissal of the Synod, and signing of the proceedings.

Such is a brief account of the presbyterial, classical, and synodical arrangements, as they existed in the lower Rhine Westphalian Reformed Church, in part, since 1571, and in whole, since 1610, down to the time of the evangelical union, a period of over two hundred years.

It would have been inconvenient for us to interrupt the course of our narrative, of the rise and progress of the Reformed form of Church government in the various provinces of the Continent, to notice the introduction of the same polity in England and Scotland. This shall now be briefly done.

The Presbyterian Church of England was formed after the model of the Reformed Churches of the Continent. At the accession of Mary, 1554, John Knox fled from England to the Continent, visited Frankfort, Geneva, and various parts of Switzerland, profiting greatly by the counsels of Calvin. In 1555, he was pastor at Frankfort for a time, but returned to England that same year. In 1556, he was elected as pastor by the English exiles of Geneva, the city of Calvin, which he accepted, and now removed his family to that city. Whilst at Geneva, "although he was now fifty years of age, he devoted himself to study, under Calvin, with youthful ardor."* In 1559, having spent about three years at Geneva, he returned to his na-

* Henry's Life of Calvin. Vol. II, p. 339.

tive land, and now began effectually to establish the Reformation there. It may be truly said, for history will verify the assertion, that what was good in the system of Knox, both as relates to doctrine and Church government, he had brought from the Reformed Church of the Continent, and what was semi-political and radical was his own. This is not the place to show how Calvin himself, with the greatest respect for Knox, yet protested against many of his radical tendencies. A single quotation from Dr. Henry's Life of Calvin in reference to Knox, is sufficient to our present purpose: "He was a powerful instrument in diffusing the principles of Calvinism in England, Scotland, and even to a still wider extent; but we must carefully keep in view the circumstances by which they were distinguished. Knox was the founder of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, from which arose the rude, fierce spirits of a subsequent period. He it was who confounded the holy cause of truth with the interests of a political party; who impressed upon the Protestant Church in England its peculiar outward character; and who, in this not apostolic, aroused a power which was afterwards to exercise so mighty and destructive an influence."*

The Church of Scotland framed its Confession of Faith, and its First Book of Discipline, and met, in its first General Assembly for its own government, in August, 1560. Dr. Henry says, that in this Book of Discipline set forth by Knox, "he shows his admiration of the rules followed at Geneva, and wrought out the system at full. Calvin had the delight to be made acquainted with this glorious progress of his plan, with this triumph of his doctrine and his discipline."†

Thus was the continental and proper Reformed system of Presbyterian Church government adopted and inaugurated in Scotland; and the Presbyterian Church in the English nation was thus a later branch of the Reformed Church. What a pity that, as it owed its establishment to

* Vol. II, p. 327. † Idem, p. 331.

that source, it did not also remain ecclesiastically in union with the mother Church. It was the earnest desire of Calvin, and others of the Reformers of the Continent, that all the Provincial Reformed Churches should be united in an ecclesiastical bond that should transcend national divisions, and differences of language. This great desire, however, was not realized. The English branch of the Reformed Church remained outwardly separate, and still holds that position both in England and America.

The first organization under an ecclesiastical judicatory of the Presbyterian emigrants in this country was the Presbytery of Philadelphia, 1706. It consisted of seven ministers. In 1716, this Presbytery was divided into "four subordinate meetings or presbyteries," and these united in the "Synod of Philadelphia," which was thus formed, holding its first meeting in Philadelphia, September 17th, 1717, composed of thirteen ministers and six elders. It is worthy of remark, that in the organization of the Presbyterian Church in this country there was no precise modelling after the Presbyterian Branch of the Reformed Church in Scotland, but the Reformed polity, in a wider sense, was very properly kept in view and made the basis of its construction. This is evident from the synodical acts of 1721, where it is declared that the Presbyterians in America had exercised the Presbyterian government and discipline, according to the practice of "*the best Reformed Churches, as far as the nature and constitution of this country will allow.*" Thus this one of the grand-daughters of the Reformed Church, as we may express it, did not merely look to a single Reformed daughter, but very wisely took new counsel of the venerable mother herself.

The first organization of the Presbyterian Presbyteries and Synods in a General Assembly, was effected in 1789. It was sundered into Old and New School in 1838—the Old School Assembly retaining the power of a final judicatory, and the New School surrendering it, and becoming only an advisory body, whilst final power was granted to the Synods—which must be regarded as a virtual abrogation

tion of that which forms the crowning perfection of the Reformed form of Church government, and is an entire departure from all the precedents of the Reformed polity.

It was on the Reformed side of the reformation that a free structure of ecclesiastical government received its earliest and noblest development. The Lutherans, in their theories of Church government, adhered longer to the old system of the Church from which they reformed, and then later, to the State to which they looked for the help needed in this respect.

It is necessary here, along side of what has been presented in regard to the Reformed system, to give also some account of the Lutheran polity. This we prefer doing, in part, in the words of Dr. Henry in his Life of Calvin.

"That it cost Luther, who was the first to set himself in opposition to the hierarchy, no slight trouble to acquire any clear notion of the Church, and of its relation to the State, is evident from the indefiniteness of his views. Melanchthon gave a far better representation of the Church in his 'Apology.' Thus, in contradistinction to the Catholic Church, he describes the true Church of Christ as the congregation of saints, bound together by the same faith in Christ, and whose communion with each other is declared by their joining in the same confession, and participating in the same sacraments. The visible, political union of God's people in the Old Testament, was a type of the future spiritual polity. The form of the outward constitution was a matter of indifference to the German reformers. The *politia externa* might exist under a variety of forms if it did but uphold the kingdom of God. Hence they did not reject, as Calvin and the Swiss, the Catholic constitution. They believed that they ought to preserve it, in so far as they could do so consistently with the Gospel. Thus it happened that they held no definite views on the rights of the Church, and would willingly have retained the Catholic system, had the bishops submitted to be reformed. But as these dignitaries resisted such attempts, and the Church was no longer subjected to their authority, the re-

formers gave their support to the temporal government, that they might obtain in return the aid of its support. Thus they allowed it to change the constitution of the Churches, when the interests of the Gospel required it, and their officers neglected to do it themselves. Hence the earlier forms originated with the civil power, and the latter acquired ecclesiastical authority by the further development of the reformation. As early as the year 1520, Luther called upon the emperor and the nobility to aid the reformation, and thus to establish the Church by means of the temporal power. Subsequently, as he gave no peculiar form of government to the Church, he was led, in his perplexity, to desire that the civil magistrates would act more decidedly, and that the government might refuse to tolerate vain doctrine, though it did not compel confession. He also advised the banishment of heretics, but not their capital punishment, in the infliction of which the civil power might go too far. After the death of Frederic the Wise, he felt still more evidently the insufficiency of his earlier views. "If on the one side, we limit and define, it is then taken advantage of; a law is necessarily introduced, and opposed to the freedom of belief; if, on the other, nothing is determined, men rush on, and make as many factions as there are heads, and thus both the Christian simplicity and the Christian union, of which St. Paul and St. Peter speak, are destroyed."

In 1527, when the great Church-visitation in the electorate of Saxony was brought to a close, Luther wrote in the preface of the Visitation-articles, drawn up by Melanchthon,—“Although the electors are not called upon to teach or govern in a spiritual capacity, still they are bound, even as temporal rulers, to prevent schisms, factions, and disturbances; even as the emperor Constantine summoned the bishops of Nicaea, because he neither would nor could suffer the Schism which Arius had created among the Christians, but constrained them to unity of doctrine and belief.”

But after making some few statements of his opinion, Luther seems to have left the whole matter, of the relation

of the State to the Church, and of their respective rights, to be settled by his followers. Instead of a mixed tribunal of laity and clergy being instituted, as in Geneva, to settle the questions in debate, superintendents were appointed. At the very first Church-visitation they received full authority to watch over churches and schools, to provide for the defence of pure doctrine, of outward order, of church property, and, further, to determine disputes respecting marriages. But as this arrangement was not found sufficient, a spiritual tribunal was established, first at Wittenberg, through the chancellor Brück, and which consisted of two spiritual and two lay councillors. During Luther's lifetime, that is, in 1542, the elector, John Frederic, employed the Wittenberg theologians and three jurists to draw up a constitution for this tribunal.

The principles of the Lutheran Church government, as contrasted with those of the Calvinistic, are seen in the so-called Wittenberg reformation of 1545, the last and the most striking exhibition of the views of the Saxon divines on Church polity.

Among other things, it is said of bishops :—"A certain variety of ranks is necessary among the servants of the Church; for unless all had the same gifts, the wiser must exercise inspection over the weak. If the existing bishops would cease from their enmity to the Gospel, and embrace the true doctrine, we might patiently endure their authority. Their aim would then necessarily be, either to preach the Gospel themselves, or to have it preached by faithful men. They would exercise by their visitations a control over the doctrine of the Church, would hold ecclesiastical sessions, and sometimes synods, and would take care of both the higher and lower schools. With regard to the choice of bishops, it seems best that it should remain as before, in the hands of the supreme colleges or chapters, and that where the princes have certain rights they should still retain them. For if an attempt should be made to restore the old practice of electing bishops by the votes of the whole people, or of the chief men of all ranks, let us remem-

ber that this mode of electing them excited, in ancient times, the greatest tumults in Asia, in Greece, and Italy; and were it practiced in Germany, it would produce still more fearful consequences."

In the fourth section, on church-tribunals, it is said,— "God has committed the sword to the magistrate to uphold discipline and respect; and He has also established an ecclesiastical tribunal, which has not the power of life and death, but that of excluding from church privileges and communion." Subsequently, and with good reason, disputes concerning marriages were referred to this tribunal, so many questions of conscience arising therefrom. These questions had often been found too difficult and perplexed to be resolved by individual pastors: it was, therefore, determined to establish consistories, at convenient distances, in every diocese, before which matrimonial disputes might be settled in a Christian spirit.

The clergy of every place were to admonish all who had fallen into sin or error. If they did not improve, they were to be cited before the consistory, in order, if found guilty, to be punished. This was the case when offences had been committed of which the civil magistrate took no cognizance; as for example, if any one published false doctrine, spoke scornfully of the Gospel or the Sacraments; if he neglected for a whole year to make confession, or to partake of the Lord's Supper; if he reviled his pastor, or any other servant of God; if he lived in open adultery, or lent his money on usury, or was disobedient to his parents, or indulged in intemperance or gambling. In any of these cases, the consistories were to pronounce sentence of excommunication, and to send an account of the sentence thus passed to the parish in which the offender dwelt: there the instrument was to be read from the pulpit, or to be nailed to the church door. Should the offender despise this proceeding against him, he might, under certain circumstances, be punished by the temporal power.

According to the views of the Saxon reformers, the true

Church, agreeably to its proper nature, was an object of belief, but never perfect on earth. Without separating, however, the invisible from the visible Church, the kingdom of the Gospel is ever to be viewed as distinct from the kingdom of the law, and therefore as independent of the latter. But the Church may require in times of necessity protection of the State. This, Christian magistrates owe exclusively to the Christian faith ; and hence there is naturally an internal bond of union between the temporal and ecclesiastical power.

That Luther was unwilling to introduce, as Calvin did, constitutional forms arose from the conviction that the steps by which the enlightenment of the German people advanced, did not agree with the establishment of such forms. He thus expressed his anxiety, "that factions might not spring therefrom ; for the Germans are a wild, rude, turbulent people, with whom it is not easy to begin anything, unless there be the pressure of the greatest necessity."*

Philip of Hesse made the experiment in 1526 of a free constitution, but without finding any imitator. The principles of this constitution were indeed far more republican than the Calvinistic system. Every district was entire in itself, and had the right to choose its own bishop (or pastor), and to depose him. An assembly of laymen and ministers was held every week, in which the conduct of every one, the bishop included, was proved and judged ; but the whole congregation only could excommunicate. Marriage causes were tried in each district by the bishop and experienced assistants. Excommunication was inflicted for spiritual offences only, but it carried with it the loss of all civil rights. The churches were united together by a Synod, which assembled yearly at Marburg. Every bishop was to be accompanied by a lay deputy. The sovereign, the higher and lower nobility, in case they were present, and the bishops and lay deputies, had all the right of voting.

* Walch x, 272. Compare also Tholuck, Litter. Anzeiger, 1832, p. 478.

The Synod tried, approved, or annulled the deposition of any bishop which might have taken place in this community. "In different cases the parishes might appeal to the Synod, but its decisions had no power except that which they derived from their intrinsic worth." The Synod of Hamberg and Lambert of Avignon rejected this constitution. Essential alterations, however, were soon necessarily introduced into this system of Church polity, which brought to light its unfitness for the times. The German communities would probably not have been opposed to such a constitution, if it had been less republican, and had it been introduced by degrees, and not suddenly. Calvin had to struggle for twenty years for his 'Institute,' and had to educate a new people for himself. Luther also wished to arm himself with the right of excommunication, but had not the courage to introduce it. In his last sermon on confession, preached at Wittenberg in 1522,* (on the occasion of the Carlstadt disturbance), he says "Christ says of confession, 'If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone,' (Matth. 18: 16); and if the offender would not abstain from his sin and humble himself, the minister was to separate him from the whole congregation, and put him under ban, till he repented and was again received. It would be a Christian work to restore this discipline, were it possible, but I cannot trust myself alone to establish it." A sterner system of discipline, such a one as was not introduced till after his death, would have saved Luther many annoyances. He comforted himself with the hope, that the improved state of the Church would of itself bring about a better form of government."†

Göbel, speaking of the Lutheran Church of Westphalia, says: "In the form of government the true Lutheran view ever manifested itself in the establishing of an inward and inseparable union of State and Church, so that everywhere the civil government as such, constituted and ruled the

* Sermon vom Bann, bei Walch, 20: p. 1099.

† Henry's Life of Calvin, pp. 396-400.

Church, without however having the privilege, in any way, to interfere with the doctrines of the ministers. Church discipline, also, was not exercised by an authority from the congregation, and in its name, but was in the hands of the civil authorities, and exercised in a civilly legal way from the stand-point of citizenship. The separation, or holding apart, of clergy and laity, pastor and congregations, without further intervention of presbyters, or elders, which has its foundation in the Lutheran doctrine and cultus, manifested itself also in Westphalia after the effort to introduce there the Reformed Presbyterial and Synodical system, since—what is very significant—there were at most only *advisory* Synods or Ministerii, and not such as had final power of decision, established; and into these there were seldom or never any Elders admitted."

To trace the future developments of the Lutheran ideas of Church government, would lead us too far out of our way. It is enough for our purpose to have shown that in its first principles it had nothing in common with that of the Reformed polity, toward which, however, it inclined more and more.

In America the first Lutheran Synod was organized August 14th, 1748, with lay delegates. "In the different kingdoms and provinces of Europe, their systems of ecclesiastical government, are very various and inefficient; in no section retaining strictly the principle of ministerial parity, with perfect freedom from State control."* In this country the government adopted by the Lutheran Church is in the main the Reformed system. Its consistories, conferences, and synods, all admit representation by Elders. Unlike the Reformed, however, their General Synod organized in 1820, "is only *advisory*, and therefore bears most analogy to the consociations of the congregational churches of New England."† Thus it stops short of the full Reformed system, and the authority disperses where it ought to culminate. It is remarkable that Dr. Alexander of

* Dr. Schmucker, in History of All Denominations, p. 333.

† Dr. Schmucker's Theology, p. 186.

Princeton (as quoted by Dr. Schmucker), in his "plan proposed for the reorganization of the Presbyterian Church, on the occasion of the recent convulsions in that body, is exactly similar in all its principal lineaments to the Lutheran system, as practised in this country by the Synods connected with the General Synod—"namely," that the General Assembly should have only *advisory* power, and their Synods, each for its own district, that final judicial power now possessed by the General Assembly. The New School body adopted this principle.† Strange that Dr. Alexander should not have seen that to disrobe the General Synod of its superior power, is to cut off the head of the Presbyterian system; because here only does its true sense become complete.

Unfortunately hitherto the Lutheran Church in this country has not been able to attain to unity and uniformity under one perfected system of government. Of the state of the Church previous to the formation of the General Synod in 1820, Dr. Schmucker says: "Prior to this era, the Church had gradually become divided into five or six different, distant, and unconnected Synods. Having no intercourse with each other, these several portions became more or less estranged, and lost all the advantages of mutual consultation, confidence, and coöperation." The organization of the General Synod was a noble movement in the right direction; but it encountered many difficulties. Two years after its organization the largest and oldest of the district Synods, that of Pennsylvania, withdrew, and has only within a few years united again. Other Synods have not yet come into the union, and of course the diffi-

† "The Synod is the court of the last resort in all cases of a judicial nature, so that the whole appellate jurisdiction of the Church is limited to its final decision as a PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY; having supreme control in its own appropriate sphere, though subordinate to the General Assembly, as to the review and constitutional oversight of its acts."

"It (the General Assembly) is not necessary to Presbyterian government, nor is any court higher than the Presbytery, but it has the advantage of representing all the congregations in one body."

"Since the Session of 1840, the Assembly exercises no judicial power, as it had formerly done, the Synod now being the highest court of appeal."—*Rev. Joel Parker, D. D., in History of All Denominations*, pp. 487, 488.

culty of uniting them indicates a variety of sentiment as well on the subject of Church government as on points of doctrine. "This system of Church government," says Dr. Schmucker in the History of all Denominations, 1844, "is not yet adopted by all our Synods; yet its general features, with perhaps a greater admixture of congregationalism, substantially pervades those Synods also which have not yet united with the General Synod." Since then, however, the General Synod has made progress; and yet simultaneously with this movement, in the way of closer ecclesiastical union, there have arisen Lutheran organizations, chiefly composed of European emigrant churches, who refuse to come into a general union, and whose ideas of Church Government are in an opposite direction from congregationalism. As life is deeper than form, and doctrine before government, the Lutheran Church in America has earnest problems of faith to adjust and harmonize in its bosom, on the successful accomplishment of which all hope of its unity must depend. The organization of the General Synod is a testimony in the right direction, which may in this way also truly become a higher power.

The organization of the German Reformed Synod in America took place nearly a year anterior to that of the Lutheran, namely September 29th, 1747. The German Reformed congregations being confined to the regions East of the Allegheny mountains, and mostly to Pennsylvania, the Synod remained one body till the year 1819, when it was, by its own action, divided into eight districts, or Classes. In 1819, the Classis of Ohio was formed, and in 1824 this body was organized into the "Synod of Ohio," with three subordinate district Synods. In 1836 the Classis of Western Pennsylvania obtained permission to unite with the Synod of Ohio, when it became "The Synod of Ohio and adjacent States." Still later the district Synods were dissolved, and the whole territory divided into Classes, under the one Synod. The two Synods are mutually represented in each other's meetings by delegates, having all the power of the other members. It is

yet necessary that these two Synods, and others which will undoubtedly spring up farther West, should be made subordinate to a still higher body uniting the representation and authority of all. As the extension of the Church has created the necessity, so the subject has already engaged initiatory consideration.

The German Reformed Church in America is organized on the true Reformed system of Church government. Pastors and Elders and Deacons are elected by the members, the Pastors being ordained by the Classes, the Elders and Deacons by the Pastors. The Pastor, Elders and Deacons form the Consistory, of which the Pastor is ex-officio President. By this body the congregation is governed,—but under the supervision of the next higher body, the Classis. The Classis is constituted by the Pastor and Elder from each congregation in its bounds. The Classis has power over the ministers, consistories, and churches under its care—but is itself under the supervision of the Synod. The Synod is composed of delegates from the Classes, the basis of representation being this: If a Classis has from three to six ministers it can send one minister and one elder to Synod—if it has from seven to twelve, two—if from thirteen to eighteen, three—and in the same proportion for any larger number. In the Synod rests the final power.

The consistories meet regularly, once a month, or, as in some congregations, at the call of the president whenever business requires its counsel. The Classes meet once a year, in the spring; and Synod once a year in Autumn.

In this system of government the members of the Church by their vote, are represented, in a gradual and well ordered ascending scale through the subordinate bodies, in the Synod where the authority which governs them culminates and from which it comes back to them as the "higher power." Thus freedom and authority are made one, each being conserved by the other.

The government of the Dutch Reformed Church in America is of course the same. Initiatory steps towards its Synodical organization in this country were taken as

early as 1737; but the end was not fully reached till September 14th, 1747—just fifteen days prior to the organization of the Synod of the German Reformed Church.*

H. H.

Lancaster, Pa.

ART. II.—GNOSTICISM.

GNOSIS denotes in general all more profound philosophical or religious knowledge, in distinction from superficial opinion or blind belief. The New Testament itself, however, makes a plain distinction between true and false gnosis. The true consists in a deep insight of the essence and structure of the Christian truth, springs from faith, is accompanied by the cardinal virtues of love and humility, serves to edify the Church, and belongs among the spiritual gifts wrought by the Holy Ghost.* The false gnosis,† on the contrary, against which Paul warns Timothy, and which he censures in the Corinthians, is a morbid pride of wisdom, an arrogant, self-conceited, ambitious knowledge, which puffs up, instead of edifying,‡ runs into idle subtleties and disputes, and verifies in its course the apostle's word: “professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.”||

In this bad sense the word applies to that strange and wonderful system of error, which began to reveal itself already in the days of St. Paul and St. John, and which in the second century, under various schools and parties, spread over the whole Church, threatening to corrupt

* See Life of Rev. Michael Schlatter, pp. 54–56.

* Λογος γνωστος, λογος σοφιας, 1 Cor. 12: 8. Comp. 13: 2, 12. Jno. 17: 3.

† Συδεινωμενος γνωστος, 1. Tim. 6: 20. ‡ 1 Cor. 8: 1. || Rom. 1: 22.

Christianity by foreign speculation and to resolve its real mysteries into phantastic dreams of the imagination. The ancient Gnosticism rests on an overvaluation of knowledge or gnosis, and a depreciation of faith or pistis. The Gnostics contrasted themselves by this name with the Pistics, or the mass of believing Christians. They regarded Christianity as consisting essentially in knowledge alone; fancied themselves the sole possessors of an esoteric, philosophical religion, which made them genuine spiritual men; and looked down with contempt upon the mere men of the soul and of the body. They moreover adulterated Christianity with sundry elements entirely foreign, and thus quite obscured the true essence of the Gospel.

As to its substance, Gnosticism is chiefly of heathen descent. It is a peculiar translation or transfusion of the heathen philosophy and religion into Christianity. This was perceived by the Church fathers in their day. Hippolytus particularly, in his lately discovered "Philosophoumena," endeavors to trace the Gnostic heresies to the various systems of Greek philosophy, making Simon Magus, for example, dependent on Heraclitus, Valentine on Pythagorus and Plato, Basilides on Aristotle, Marcion on Empedocles; and hence, in his work, he first exhibits the doctrines of the Greek philosophy from Thales down. Of all these systems Platonism had the greatest influence, especially on the Alexandrian Gnostics; though not so much in its original Hellenic form, as in its later orientalized eclectic and mystic cast, of which Neo-Platonism was another fruit. The Platonic speculation yielded the germs of the Gnostic doctrine of aeons, the conceptions of matter, of the antithesis of an ideal and a real world, of an antimundane fall of souls from the ideal world, of the origin of sin from matter, and of the needed redemption of the soul from the fetters of the body. We find also in the Gnostics traces of the Pythagorean symbolical use of numbers, the Stoic physics and ethics, and some Aristotelian elements.

But this reference to Hellenic philosophy, with which Massuet was content, is not enough. Since Beausobre and

Mosheim, the East has been rightly joined with Greece, as the native home of this heresy. This may be inferred from the mystic, fantastic, enigmatic form of the Gnostic speculation, and from the fact, that most of its representatives sprang from Egypt and Syria. The conquests of Alexander, the spread of the Greek language and literature, and especially Christianity, produced a mighty agitation in the Eastern mind, which re-acted on the West. Gnosticism has accordingly been regarded as more or less parallel with the heretical forms of Judaism, with Essenism, Therapeutism, Philo's philosophico-religious system, and with the Cabbala, the origin of which probably dates as far back as the first century. The affinity of Gnosticism also with the Zoroastrian dualism of a kingdom of light and a kingdom of darkness, is unmistakable, especially in the Syrian Gnostics. Its alliance with the pantheistic, docetic, and ascetic elements of Buddhism, which had advanced at the time of Christ to Western Asia, is equally plain. Parsic and Indian influence is most evident in Manichaeism, while the Hellenic element there amounts to very little.

Gnosticism, with its syncretistic tendency, is no isolated fact. It struck its roots deep in the mighty revolution of ideas induced by the fall of the old religions and the triumph of the new. Philo, in his time, endeavored to combine the Jewish religion, by allegorical exposition, or rather imposition, with Platonic philosophy; and this system, according as it should be prosecuted under the Christian or the heathen influence, might produce either the speculative theology of the Alexandrian Church fathers, or the heretical Gnosis. Still more nearly akin to Gnosticism is Neo-Platonism, which arose a little later than Philo's system, ignored Judaism, and in its stead employed the more of Eastern and Western heathenism.

The Gnostic syncretism, however, differs materially from both the Philonic and the Neo-Platonic by taking up Christianity, of which Philo was wholly ignorant, and which the Neo-Platonists directly or indirectly opposed. This the Gnostics regarded as the highest stage of the develop-

ment of religion, though they so corrupted it by the admixture of foreign matter, as to destroy its identity.

Gnosticism is, therefore, the grandest and most comprehensive form of speculative religious syncretism known to history. It consists of Oriental mysticism, Greek philosophy, Alexandrian Philonic and Cabbalistic Judaism, and Christian ideas of salvation, not merely mechanically compiled, but, as it were, mechanically combined. At least in its fairly developed form in the Valentinian system, it is, in its way, a wonderful structure of speculative or rather intuitive thought, and at the same time an artistic work of the creative fancy, a Christian mythological epic. The old world here rallied all its energies, to make out of its diverse elements some new thing, and to oppose to the real, substantial universalism of the Catholic Church an ideal, shadowy universalism of speculation. But this fusion of all systems served in the end only to hasten the dissolution of Eastern and Western heathenism, while the Christian element came forth purified and strengthened from the crucible.

To their speculative zeal the Gnostics, at least in some cases, added a practical moral feeling, a sense of sin, stimulated by Christianity, but overstrained, so as to lead them, in bold contrast with the pagan deification of nature, to ascribe nature to the devil, to abhor the body as the seat of evil, and to practice, therefore, extreme austerities upon themselves. This practical feature is made prominent by Möhler, the Roman Catholic divine. But Möhler goes quite too far, when he derives the whole phenomenon of Gnosticism (which he wrongly views as a forerunner of Protestantism) directly and immediately from Christianity. He represents it as a hyper-christianity, an exaggerated contempt for the world, which, when seeking for itself a speculative basis, gathered from older philosophemes, theosophies, and mythologies all it could use for its purpose.

The flourishing period of the Gnostic schools was the second century. In the sixth century only faint traces of them remained; yet some Gnostic and especially Manichaeian ideas continue to appear in several heretical sects

of the Middle Ages, such as the Priscillianists, the Paulicians, the Bogomiles, and the Catharists ; and even the history of modern theological and philosophical speculation, at least in Germany, (think of Hegel, Strauss and the Tübingen school,) shows kindred tendencies.

The number of the Gnostics it is impossible to ascertain. We find them in almost all portions of the ancient Church; chiefly where Christianity came into close contact with Judaism and heathenism, as in Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor ; then in Rome, the rendezvous of all forms of truth and falsehood ; in Gaul, where they were opposed by Irenaeus, and in Africa, where they were attacked by Tertullian and afterwards by Augustine, who was himself a Manichaean for several years. They found most favor with the educated, and threatened to lead astray the teachers of the Church. But they could gain no foothold among the people ; indeed, as esoterics, they stood aloof from the masses ; and their philosophical societies were no doubt rarely as large as the Catholic congregations.

We now proceed to give a succinct analysis of the system of Gnosticism as a whole.

Gnosticism is a heretical philosophy of religion, or more exactly, a mythological theosophy, which reflects intellectually the peculiar fermenting state of that remarkable age of transition from the heathen to the Christian order of things. If it were merely an unintelligible congeries of puerile absurdities and impious blasphemies, as it is grotesquely portrayed by older historians, it could not have fascinated so many vigorous intellects and produced such a long continued agitation in the ancient Church. It is an attempt to solve some of the deepest metaphysical and theological questions. It deals with the great antitheses of God and world, spirit and matter, idea and phenomenon ; and endeavors to solve the deep problem of the origin of evil,* and the whole question of the rise, development, and end of the world.

* *Uterus eam.*

In form and method it is, as already observed, more Oriental than Grecian. The Gnostics, in their daring attempt to unfold the mysteries of an upper world, disdained the trammels of reason and resorted to spiritual intuition. Hence they speculate not so much in logical and dialectic mode as in an imaginative, semi-poetic way, and they clothe their ideas not in the simple, clear, and sober language of reflection, but in the many-colored, fantastic, mythological dress of type, symbol, and allegory. Thus monstrous nonsense and the most absurd conceits are chaotically mingled up with profound thoughts and poetic intuitions.

The highest source of knowledge, with these heretics, was a secret tradition, in contrast with the open popular tradition of the Catholic Church. In this respect they essentially differ from later sects which generally discard tradition altogether and appeal exclusively to the Bible as understood by themselves. They appealed also to apocryphal documents, which arose in the second century in great numbers, under eminent names of apostolic or pre-Christian times. Epiphanius, in his 26th Heresy, counts the apocrypha of the Gnostics by thousands, and Irenaeus found among the Valentinians alone a countless multitude of such writings, "innumerabilis multitudo apocryphorum et perpetram scripturarum."† And finally, when it suited their purpose, the Gnostics employed single portions of the Bible, without being able to agree either as to the extent or the interpretation of the same. The Old Testament they generally rejected, either entirely, as in the case of the Marcionites and the Manichaeans, or at least in great part; and in the New Testament they preferred certain books or portions, such as the Gospel of John, with its profound spiritual intuitions, and either rejected the other books, or wrested them to suit their ideas. Marcion, for example, thus mutilated the Gospel of Luke, and received in addition to it only ten of Paul's Epistles, thus substituting an arbitrary canon of

† *Adv. haer.* I, c. 20, § 1.

eleven books for the Catholic Testament of twenty-seven. In interpretation they adopted, even with far less moderation than Philo, the most arbitrary and extravagant allegorical principles; despising the letter as sensuous, and the laws of language and exegesis as fetters of the mind. The number 30 in the New Testament, for instance, particularly in the life of Jesus, is made to denote the number of the Valentinian aeons; and the lost sheep in the parable is Achamoth. Even to heathen authors, to the poems of Homer, Aratus and Anacreon, they applied this method, and discovered in these works the deepest Gnostic mysteries.* They gathered from the whole field of ancient mythology, astronomy, physics, and magic every thing, which could serve in any way to support their fancies.

The common characteristics of all the Gnostic systems are (1) Dualism ; the assumption of an eternal antagonism between God and matter. (2) The demiurgic notion ; the separation of the creator of the world, or the demiurges from the proper God. (3) Docetism ; the resolution of the human element in the person of the Redeemer into mere deceptive appearance.†

We will endeavor now to present a clear and connected view of the theoretical and practical system of Gnosticism in general as it comes before us in its more fully developed forms.

1. The Gnostic theology revolves about the conceptions of God, matter, demiurge, and Christ.

It starts from absolute primal being. God is the unfathomable abyss,‡ locked up within himself, without beginning, unnameable and incomprehensible ; on the one hand infinitely exalted above every existence, yet on the other hand the original aeon, the sum of all ideas and spiritual powers. Basilides would not ascribe even existence to him, and thus, like Hegel, starts from absolute non-entity.

But the abyss opens ; God enters upon a process of development, and sends forth from his bosom the several aeons ; that is, the attributes and unfolded powers of his

* Hippol. Philos. V, 8. 20. IV, 46. † *Δοκησις, φαντασία.* ‡ *Bυθος.*

nature, the ideas of the eternal spirit-world, such as mind, reason, wisdom, power, truth, life.* These emanate from the absolute in a certain order, according to Valentine in pairs with sexual polarity. The further they go from the great source, the poorer and weaker they become. Besides the notion of emanation,† the Gnostics employed also, to illustrate the self-revelation of the absolute, the figure of the evolution of numbers from an original unit, or of utterance in tones gradually diminishing to the faint echo.‡ The cause of the procession of the aeons is, with some, as with Valentine, the self-limiting love of God, with others, metaphysical necessity. The whole body of aeons forms the ideal world, or light-world, or spiritual fullness, pleroma.§

Essentially different from this is the material visible world, in which the principle of evil reigns. This cannot proceed from God; else he were the author of evil. It must come from an opposite principle. This is matter,¶ which stands in eternal opposition to God and the ideal world. The Syrian Gnostics, and still more the Manichaeans, agreed with Parsism in conceiving matter as an intrinsically evil substance, the raging kingdom of Satan, at irreconcilable warfare with the kingdom of light. The Alexandrian Gnostics followed more the Platonic idea of the *οὐλή*, and conceived this as *κενωμα*, emptiness, in contrast with the divine vital fullness, or *πληρωμα*; or as the *μῆτρα οὐν*, related to the divine being as shadow to light, and forming the dark limit, beyond which the mind cannot pass. This matter is in itself dead, but becomes animated by a union with the pleroma, which again is variously described. In the Manichaean system, there are powers of darkness, which seize by force some parts of the kingdom of light. But usually the union is made to proceed from above. The last link in the chain of divine aeons, either too weak to keep its hold on the ideal world, or seized with

* Νοῦς, λογος, εὐφέτα, ὁνηματις, αληθεία, ζωη, etc. † Προβολη. ‡ Basilides and Saturninus use the former illustration; Marcus uses the latter. § Πληρωμα. ¶ Υλη

a sinful passion for the embrace of the infinite abyss, falls as a spark of light into the dark chaos of matter, and imparts to it a germ of divine life, but in this bondage feels a painful longing after redemption, with which the whole world of aeons sympathizes. This weakest aeon is called by Valentine the lower wisdom, or Achamoth, and marks the extreme point, where spirit must surrender itself to matter, where the infinite must enter into the finite, and thus form a basis for the real world. The myth of Achamoth is grounded in the thought, that the finite is incompatible with the absolute, yet in some sense demands it, to account for itself.

Here now comes in the third principle of Gnostic speculation, namely, the world-maker, commonly called the Demiurge,* termed by Basilides Archon, or world-ruler, by Ophites, Jaldabaoath, or son of chaos. He is a creature of the fallen aeon, formed of physical material, and thus standing between God and matter. He makes out of matter the visible, sensible world, and rules over it. He has his throne in the planetary heavens, and presides over time and over the sidereal spirits. Astrological influences were generally ascribed to him. He is the God of Judaism, the Jehovah, who imagines himself to be the Supreme and only God. But in the further development of this idea systems differ; the anti-Jewish Gnostics, Marcion and the Ophites, represent the demiurge as an insolent being, resisting the purposes of God, while the Judaizing Gnostics, Basilides and Valentine, make him a restricted, unconscious instrument of God to prepare the way for redemption.

Redemption itself, that is the liberation of the light-spirit from the chains of dark matter, is effected by Christ, the most perfect aeon, who is the mediator of the return from the sensible phenomena world to the supersensuous ideal world, just as the demiurge is the mediator of apostacy from the pleroma to the kenoma. This redeeming aeon, called by Valentine *σωτήρ* or *Ιησοῦς*, descends through the sphere of heaven, and assumes an ethereal appearance of a body;

* Δεμιουργός, a term used by Plato in a similar sense.

according to another view, unites himself with the man Jesus, or with the Jewish Messiah, at the baptism, and forsakes him again at the passion. At all events the Redeemer, however conceived in other respects, is allowed no actual contact with sinful matter. His human birth, his sufferings and death, are explained by Gnosticism after the manner of the Indian mythology, as a deceptive appearance, a transient vision, a spectral form, which he assumed only to reveal himself to the sensuous nature of man. Reduced to a clear philosophical definition, the Gnostic Christ is really nothing more than the ideal spirit of man himself, as in the "Leben Jesu" of Strauss. The Holy Ghost is commonly conceived as a subordinate aeon. The central fact in the work of Christ is the communication of the Gnosis to a small circle of the initiated, prompting and enabling them to strive with clear consciousness after the ideal world and the original unity. According to Valentine the heavenly Soter brings Aechamoth after innumerable sufferings into the pleroma, and unites himself with her—the most glorious aeon with the lowest—in an eternal spirit marriage. With this all disturbance in the heaven of aeons is allayed, and a blessed harmony and inexpressible delight are restored, in which all spiritual (pneumatic) men, or genuine Gnostics, share. Matter is at last entirely consumed by a fire breaking out from its dark bosom.

2. The anthropology of the Gnostics corresponds with their theology. They see in man a microcosm, consisting of spirit, body, and soul, reflecting the three principles, God, matter, and demiurge, though in very different degrees. They make three classes of men: the spiritual,* in whom the divine element, a spark of light from the ideal world, predominates; the bodily, carnal, or material,† in whom matter, the gross sensuous principle rules; and the psychical,‡ in whom the demiurgie, quasi-divine principle, the mean between the two preceding, prevails. These three classes they frequently identified with the adherents

* Πνευματικοί. † Σωματικοί, φυσικοί, σαρκικοί, ιλλεῖς. ‡ Φυχικοί.

of the three religions respectively; the spiritual men with the Christians, the carnal with the heathens, the psychical with the Jews. But they also made the same distinction among the professors of any one religion, particularly among the Christians; and they regarded themselves as the genuine spiritual men in the full sense of the word, while they looked upon the great mass of Christians* as only psychical, not able to rise from blind faith to true knowledge, too weak for the good, and too tender for the evil, longing for the divine, yet unable to attain it, and thus hovering between the pleroma of the ideal world and the kenoma of the sensual.

Ingenious as this thought is, it is just the basis of that unchristian distinction of esoteric and exoteric religion, and that pride of knowledge, in which Gnosticism runs directly counter to the Christian principle of humility and love.

3. We pass to the ethics of Gnosticism. All these heretics agree in disparaging the divinely created body and over-rating the spirit, and in the pride naturally connected with such an error. Beyond this we perceive among them two opposite tendencies: a gloomy asceticism, and a frivolous antinomianism; both grounded, however, in the dualistic principle, in a false ascription of evil to matter and of matter to the devil, and each extreme frequently running into the other, as the Nicolaitan maxim in regard to the abuse of the flesh,† was made to serve asceticism first and then libertinism.

The more earnest Gnostics, like Marcion, Sarturninus, and Tatian, and the Manicheans also, felt uncomfortable in the sensuous, corruptible and perishing world, ruled by the demiurge and by Satan; they abhorred the body as formed from it, and forbade the use of certain kinds of food and all nuptial intercourse, as an adulteration of themselves with sinful matter; like the errorists noticed by Paul in his pastoral Epistles.‡ They thus confounded sin with

* οἱ πόλλοι. † Δει καταχρηθεῖ τῇ σαρκὶ; the flesh must be abused, to be conquered.

‡ Comp. 1 Tim. 4: 8.

matter, and vainly imagined that, matter being dropped, sin, its accident, would fall with it. Instead of hating sin only, which God has not made, they hated the world, which he has made.

The other class of Gnostics, as the Nicolaitans, the Ophites, the Carpocratians, and the Antitactes, in a proud conceit of the exaltation of the spirit above matter, or even on the diabolical principle, that sensuality must be overcome by indulging it, bid defiance to all moral laws, and gave themselves up to the most shameless licentiousness. It is no great thing, said they, according to Clement of Alexandria, to restrain lust; but it is surely a great thing, not to be conquered by lust, when one indulges it. According to Epiphanius, there were even Gnostic sects in Egypt, which, starting from a filthy, naturalistic pantheism, and identifying Christ with the generative powers of nature, practiced debauchery as a mode of worship, and after having, as they thought, offered and collected all their strength, blasphemously exclaimed: I am Christ. From these pools of sensuality and Satanic pride arose the malaria of a whole literature, of which, however, fortunately, nothing more than a few names has come down to us.

4. In cultus the Gnostic docetism and hyper-spiritualism led consistently to naked simplicity, as in Marcion; sometimes to the rejection of all sacraments and outward means of grace; if not even, as in the Prodigians, to blasphemous self-exaltation above all, that is called God and worship.*

But with this came also the opposite extreme of a symbolic and mystic pomp, especially in the sect of the Marcosians. These Marcosians held to a two-fold baptism, that applied to the human Jesus, the Messiah of the psychical, and that administered to the heavenly Christ, the Messiah of the spiritual; they decorated the baptistery like a banquet-hall; and they first introduced extreme unction. As early as the second century the Basilideans celebrated the feast of Epiphany. The Simonians and Carpocratians used images of Christ and of their religious heroes in their wor-

* Comp. 2 Thess. 2: 4.

ship. The Valentinians and Ophites sang in hymns the deep longing of Achamoth for redemption from the bonds of matter. Bardesanes is known as the first Syrian hymn writer. Many Gnostics, following their patriarch, Simon, gave themselves to magic, and introduced their arts into their worship ; as the Marcosians did in the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

5. Of the outward organization of the Gnostics (with the exception of the Manichaeans, who had a complete hierarchy with a primacy) we can say little. Their aim was to resolve Christianity into a magnificent speculation ; the practical business of organization was foreign to their exclusively intellectual bent. They formed, not so much a sect or party, as a multitude of philosophical schools. Many were unwilling to separate at all from the Catholic Church, but assumed in it, as theosophists, the highest spiritual rank. Some were even clothed with ecclesiastical office, as we must no doubt infer from the fiftieth Apostolic Canon, where it is said, with evident reference to the gloomy, perverse asceticism of the Gnostics : “ If a bishop, a priest, or a deacon, or any ecclesiastic, abstain from marriage, from flesh, or from wine, not for practice in self-denial, but from disgust, ($\beta\delta\epsilon\lambda\nu\rho\alpha$), forgetting, that God made every thing very good, that he made even the male and the female, in fact even blaspheming the creation, ($\beta\lambda\alpha\sigma\gamma\mu\alpha\omega\delta\alpha\beta\alpha\lambda\lambda\epsilon\tau\eta\nu\delta\gamma\mu\alpha\omega\gamma\mu\alpha\omega$) the same shall be excommunicated.” This shows the antagonistic attitude which the early Church was forced to assume even against the better class of the Gnostics.

6. As to the effect of Gnosticism, it was, like all heresy, overruled for the promotion of truth by the wisdom and mercy of God. It acted as a most powerful stimulus upon the intellectual activity of the early Church and was the negative condition of the patristic theology, which cannot be understood without it. It was in opposition to it that those fundamental doctrines of the oecumenical creeds on the unity and trinity of God, on the creation of the world, on the true humanity and divinity of Christ, on the rule of faith, and the resurrection of the body, were brought out

and scientifically developed. Thus modern German rationalism and pantheism, the greatest, most learned and powerful system of error, which arose since the days of Gnosticism, served a similar good purpose and called forth the modern evangelical theology of Germany, which is at once a refutation of rationalism and a mighty progress in the intellectual life and wealth of the Church.

P. S.

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ART. III.—EVIDENCES OF CIVILIZATION.*

I propose for our consideration some of the displays that at this time distinguish the developments of our national life, and the influences these are likely to exert on our thinking as a people, and destiny as a nation; and to group a few of those phenomena under what is believed to be their appropriate head, or governing principle.

I propose to consider the Individual, in his connection with society and the influences and evidences of the principle of the absorption of the individual by society and government, as they are believed to exist in the public mind.

The Individuality or freedom of man under government and law, has ever been exposed to two dangerous and destroying influences: First, the Spirit of Anarchy, and second, the Spirit of Despotism. In other words, the tendency or disposition of man to shake off all government and law, and exercise a personal freedom and independence destructive to the freedom of others, and finally to that of himself; or in the opposite direction, to invest government or society with unjust and oppressive powers, quite as formidable

* An Address delivered before the Alumni Association of Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa., July 27th, 1858, by A. K. Syester, Esq., of Hagerstown, Md.

to liberty or individuality as its opposing principle. The first is the principle of Individuality expanded into Anarchy; the second, the principle of Social power expanded into Despotism.

When we remember that government has its origin or necessity in a two-fold nature of man : first, his direct, or individual affections ; second, his indirect or social affections,* and consider that his direct or individual affections are always regarded as more energetic and stronger, than his social or sympathetic affections, it may seem strange and incredible, when we assert that of the two, the social affections and feelings, have always been so fostered, trained, strengthened and developed, as completely to absorb and dwarf the individual feelings, under the operations of almost every government that ever existed.

It was especially the vice of every government of antiquity that it invariably assumed and exercised powers inconsistent with, and destructive of, every consideration connected with the dignity, importance, rights, or accountability of man. That government became despotic or absolute, without one struggle on the part of the people to avert the evil, and the most abject slavery existed among all, and still exists under every government that bears any analogy to, those that flourished centuries ago ; and these assumptions and exactions of government were sanctioned by reason and philosophy, and vindicated by the people who were made thus the victims of unjust and oppressive power.

There has come to pass, however, not indeed so universally and clearly as might be wished, but sufficiently general to establish it as an object of permanent interest among the thoughtful, this important and significant revolution in opinion, namely, that government exists not for its own sake, neither for the sake alone of society, but for the protection of the individual against the encroachments of society and for the development of his varied capabilities ;— that man is no longer to be regarded in that relation as an instrument to be formed and fashioned to subserve the

* See Calhoun's works, 1st Vol.

purposes of government, but that government is an establishment to be moulded in conformity to his dignity and importance, and with careful reference to his high destiny; that man is not made for government, but government is made for man. Simple and self-evident as the reduced form of this proposition may appear, the world has been slow, very slow in acknowledging its truth. Century after century has looked upon its toilsome and precarious growth, and its truth is just coming to be recognized and sanctioned. It is, however, not universally endorsed, neither is it by any means practically illustrated, or substantially vindicated under the operations of Law or Government anywhere to the full extent of its paramount claims and interests. It has never been without its friends in the economy of government. It was too closely allied with the truest instincts and virtues of the human heart, ever to have been without some one, who would announce it in his published thoughts, illustrate it in his personal experience, or vindicate it in his death. Many of the ancient governments where, from their structure and history, we naturally turn for a discovery of this proposition, were total strangers to its entire claims.

In the governments of Greece, pure democracies, as we know them to have been, we look for a protection of the individual, for a recognition of man's personal accountability and a vindication of his high and honored destiny; but these Governments never once felt the force of these honored claims; never admitted them into the spirit of their laws; their voice was never once heard in the areopagus of that people. No one indeed can read the history of Greece without a shudder at that page, where the individual is seen in his relations with society and government. Government and society were everything; man was nothing, except so far as he contributed to the splendors and power of the State. We are startled at beholding, amid all the perfections of Grecian life and the deathless glories and unfading splendors that invest her name, the Individual, dwarfed and trembling before the altars of her nationality,

adorned as they were with the matchless beauties of her art, and the finished precision of her science ; and notwithstanding all that her poets, orators, painters, sculptors and philosophers have done for her, yet her statesmen have marred the beauty of her national character, deformed the proportions of her social life, and blurred the radiance of her history by monstrous outrages on the natural rights of man, that seem darker and blacker by the very brightness and splendors that surround them.

Humanity grows pale when told that a society whose brow was so decked with all the jewelry of thought, whose step amid the intricacies of science was so graceful and faultless, and which was clothed in the flowing robes of a most charming and elegant literature, could from considerations of self, tear from the embrace of maternal affection the delicate, deformed or helpless infant to which that mother clung with sad but increased fondness because of its very deformity.

It is still more terrible to remember that that queenly, yet remorseless society, could, for its own interest, so distort and dry up the natural and affectionate impulses of the human heart, in training and schooling the public mind, as to cause that mother to experience a high and sacred duty in thus destroying the life of an offspring, toward whom, by reason of its delicacy, the heart prompted a fonder love, and a more sacred care.

It is equally revolting to consider that age, around which so much of our veneration and regard will ever associate itself, that decrepitude, that shall always challenge our tender and forbearing sympathies, that these met with neither respect or sympathy from a society that crowned government with the honors of earth, that crushed out all true nobility of the soul in the degradation of the individual, whose existence had no significance, no purpose or glory, beyond the interests of the State. More than all this is made apparent from the temper and tone with which society there inoculated the philosophic mind of Greece; for in her Philosophy, as applied to her polity, her Philos-

ophy, which there, as every where else, is the fullest expression of national being and temper, these enormities stand out in bold relief.

We are appalled at the fearful calmness of Plato, and his utter disregard of anything sacred or important in individual life, when we find him in the presence of the State using such expressions as these: That "With respect to the children of citizens of inferior rank, and even the children of other citizens who are born deformed, the magistrate shall hide them, as is proper, in some secure place, which it shall be forbidden to reveal."

Aristotle also observes: "In order to avoid nourishing weak or lame children, the law should direct them to be exposed, or made way with." It was monstrous that Sparta and other governments of Greece actually committed such monstrous and shocking crimes, but it is absolutely incredible to believe that reason approved them and philosophy threw its sanctions around them, adopting and vindicating them as the perfection of reason, as applied in that direction. When the philosophy of a people can be made the text book of the defence of crime, and reason its advocate, when society can thus distort and wither all the green leaves of human affection in the cruel crucible of its philosophy, we fain would turn in loathing and disgust from the sterile fields and stagnant pools of national life, bereft of every vestige of Individuality, even though the Ignes Fatui, generated in that broad waste of miasma and death, light up the scene with a rare and striking wonder. We would not that a single cloud should flit across the radiant glories that lie broad bannered, in the history of Greece; we would not that a single leaf should fall faded and withered from that still green cypress that encircles her fame, or that one object of attachment or regard should be torn from a name redolent with all the perfections of classic beauty and the graces of a polite and elegant literature. But you will all agree that in Greece the importance, responsibilities and rights of the individual were not recognized, that his obligations were sadly deformed and disfig-

ured; that in those pure democracies the most revolting tyrannies prevailed. The Individual was swallowed up in society, he was lost in the State. It will also be admitted that this absorption of the Individual by society, was not the work of a day, a year, or several years; not the consequence of a sudden and violent overthrow of an old order of things, and the establishment of a new. The chains of slavery were not suddenly forged around the old Grecian.

The frame and structure of those governments, at the same time, demonstrate the existence at one time of the active presence of a strong and masculine feeling which moulded them into forms, where the highest assertion of Individuality was graven; they demonstrate the existence of a powerful and jealous interest in society, which sought to secure for all time the rights of man, in his relations with society and law, by introducing him into a direct and active participation in marking out the practical operations of government; and yet we have seen that the Individual was absorbed in society. Government had not gone out suddenly; it had drifted out slowly from its original mooring. The influences that had first moved it were not perceived; or if perceived, were accounted unimportant. They worked on for years silently and steadily, and the people had not learned from the lips of any of their great ones, that "the price of Liberty was eternal vigilance." The old Grecian looked with pride upon the wealth and accumulating splendors of his State, or bowed in humble submission before a power and patronage which it had been his glory to build up, but before whose glance he trembled, the mere toy of its caprice. He was taught to trust in a human power beyond himself, saw the State assuming the care of interests, and promoting objects, valuable, as he believed, to society, and he gave over with cheerfulness, now a jot, and then a tittle of his own natural rights, trusting to the justice of the people.

The State had assumed the direction of all public diversions and to a large extent of private recreation. He saw that State, clothed with vast powers for Good or for Evil,

invested with resources to gratify national pride and personal ambition, public welfare and personal interest, to redress public evils or personal wrongs, and never once asked his reason how far the State might safely be entrusted with its important powers, or questioned his judgment whither all these were tending. He looked only to the virtues or charities of the object to be realized, never considering whether the means evoked might not in the end, be infinitely worse than the evils to be arrested. It mattered little to him, what citizen was stricken down, provided society demanded the sacrifice. "It would be monstrous if the people could not do what they like," was the instant response of the multitude to the faltering defense of the commanders at Argenusae. From being indifferent to the rights of others, each man had grown regardless of his own, and finally those promptings that first placed the Individual high up in the economy and distribution of powers under Grecian government, were overshadowed and dwarfed under the supreme and dangerous attributes, thus little by little bestowed on society and the State.

The political history of Greece, presenting us with this melancholy decline of that stalwart principle, which first impressed its virtues on her policy and which was so sadly and without a struggle effaced, is followed by the same story in Rome. The rise and decline of Individuality in that vast and powerful government might well lead us to question its stability anywhere. After the expulsion of the Tarquins, and the establishment of the Tribune, the Roman government assumed the form of a pure Republic, with an admirable distribution of powers; the whole structure bound together by a most solemn league and covenant. Not content with a simple participation in the enactment of laws operating on him; not content with simply erecting government as his defense against the encroachments of society, the old Roman limited the operations and scope of government itself; he established a system of checks and balances on the powers and departments of government by dividing those powers, and plainly marking out those departments.

There was, therefore, an assurance in the form of government, in the division of its powers, in the plan adopted to circumscribe the scope of its operation, in the written law, in the solemn covenant that distributed the powers and defined the extent of each, and above all in the history, and stern and inflexible character of the old Roman, that society would not there absorb the individual, that government could not trench upon his rights. For many years the old Roman guarded his admirable government and inestimable rights with more than vested fidelity. Amid all the excitements and convulsions of party struggles, the shocks of foreign war, and the seductions of its conquests, or the splendid triumphs of Roman armies, he seems to have retained with jealous and tenacious grasp his iron hold on his personal rights. But long before the form of the Republic was broken down, the spirit of Republicanism was extinct in the Roman heart.

Centralization, a concentration of power, had been silently undermining the liberty of the Roman citizen, and eating out those stern Republican virtues, under whose influence the Roman name had grown great, and yet the citizen fondly dreamed his liberties were eternal, because the Republic existed. Government soon began to draw to itself powers and assume responsibilities other than those contemplated in the establishment of the Tribune. The Tribune itself demanded additional powers, in order to promote the interests of the plebian, and the demand was too often honored. The Tribune came to be regarded as the agent of the plebians, and government itself as the agent of society. The Republic had grown powerful and its honors splendid. Its positions were too dazzling, its powers too tempting for even Roman virtue. It was concentrating, by these means the affections of the people upon itself, and thereby also all power; for the people too readily gave, or too quietly submitted to its exactions. Party spirit and partisan strifes ran riot over the promptings of that true dignity of character and that proper self-reliance that always invests the individual with the crown of self-respect, and

the true dignity of manhood. Conquest had set her stars and trophies on the brow of the State, and had laid the wealth of empires at her feet. All other people worshipped the Roman power, why should not the Roman citizen? The known world was quailing before the fiery glance of her stupendous and resistless power, how could he, how dared he question her decrees; her haughty step and impious frown was on the banded strength and sacred rights of the world, and the cries of injured innocence and appeals of outraged right, went up in vain. What was man under this vast, overshadowing, almost boundless stretch of consolidated might and power! The Individual was more completely absorbed than ever. The forms that he had established to prevent centralization by operating a division of power, behind which, in times of peril, he might entrench his individuality, and defend his rights, were washed off by the surgings of that proud nationality, that swept conquering over all the world. The citizen was transformed into an instrument in building up her power. His life was nothing, save only as it contributed to its expansion; its noblest manifestations found their ultimate and highest glory, only in that. For this power, men were called on to peril life, to expend it, to die. Men fought for Rome, for that peerless power that had crushed out national existence, and stricken down justice and right all over the world, and had given the citizen in exchange for the hardy freedom of old, the splendid appointments and dazzling patronage of a proud and mighty State.

That the Roman mind had been gradually seduced from a proper estimate of the individual, and that man was no longer respected in his dignity and position or rights, is manifest from the purposes to which society, under the sanctions of government, with a coldness absolutely incredible, so often dedicated him. The gladiatorial shows of themselves are enough to define the view with which government regarded the people, and the people each other. The degradation to which it was the practice, and pleasure, of both government and society, to reduce the unfortunate

victims of war ; the hungry avidity and the fearful pleasure with which the people crowded to witness these scenes of murderous strife, demonstrate that the Roman heart had lost all conception of the dignity or responsibility of man, and that he could be made at any time, to minister to an appetite, whose greedy gorging could be appeased only with innocent and unfortunate blood. The Individual was absorbed in a centralized power, the dignity of his character, his destiny and accountability were all overshadowed by the might and majesty of society. And finally, a government having origin in the noble recoil of a political heart, whose generous indignation was roused by the personal wrongs and personal consideration of one of her most humble but noble citizens, and whose every power and aim was thus marshalled in obedience to the demands of Individuality asserting its claims against the exorbitant pretensions of society, was divested of its vitality, robbed of its power, by the growth of that principle of social despotism, or centralization, that has ever existed as the most formidable enemy to the healthful and manly development of the Individual.

If we draw to our aid the light of a practical philosophy, it will be seen that, in the two orders of civilization, we have just been so hastily contemplating, the value and importance of the Individual decreased precisely in the same degree that the strength of society and the influence of the State expanded, or rather that the growth of Individuality kept no equal pace with its rivals. We have seen how prone is the human heart to forget, or overlook its own individual dignity, accountability and importance, under the intoxications which the splendors of a powerful government produce ; how liable humanity has ever been, under the most favorable circumstances, to render homage to some objective power, at the expense of the yet higher and truer dignity of the soul, and to dwarf and drivel all the noble considerations of self-respect and importance in the support of some interest beyond it, whose pretensions are exaggerated by the voluntary concessions,

or servile habitudes of the Individual himself. It will, therefore, surely be no impertinent inquiry instituted, whether there be not among us influences, and at the same time displays of national being, calculated to lead us, and pointing with unerring precision to the same fatal errors and evils; whether we have not too often, and are not now bestowing on society, many of the attributes that belong to the individual, and falling into modes of thought, and habitudes of action, calculated to invest the State with certain responsibilities and duties, that ought to be assumed and tenaciously held by the Individual as the very elements and conditions of his being.

Society indeed stands before us here, armed with a prouder prestige than the old Roman ever saw: crowned with a loftier honor than ever gilded the name of Greece, and with a more dazzling diadem resting on its brow, than poetic fancy ever gleaned from the concentrated glories of both.

Literature and Science are beginning to invest our name with the most honored associations. An oratory peculiarly our own has thrown its electric ardors over the national heart, touching all its cords with an enthusiasm and power rivaling the noblest displays of antiquity, and filling the world with the measure of a fame unrivaled in our own age. Art is flinging the flowing robes of its own perfections like a beautiful mantle around us. Military glory, and naval achievement have laid their bloody trophies and gory honors thick and high on our national altars; a daring commerce is laying the world under tribute, and pouring its wealth at our feet; and the stars and stripes are streaming o'er every bounding billow of the ocean, or mirrored in every tranquil sea of the world.

The material displays of our national life are the wonder of the world, and the pride of our own bosoms. Before the energies of our national being an almost interminable and boundless forest, stretching from the Blue Ridge, in the East, beyond the banks of the Mis-

sissippi in the West, has given way. The Alleghenies, that formed the most remote boundaries and almost impossible barrier to the colonies, have long since been traversed by turnpikes, penetrated by canals and tunneled by railroads, and a countless army of civilization, has been thronging through their gorges, crowding through their defiles or pouring from their summits and spreading throughout the great valley of the Mississippi, grappling with forest stream and marsh, until the rich mould of unnumbered centuries, is teeming with the happy homes, busy population and abundant harvests of a high and energetic civilization. Rank after rank, column after column, still continue to follow each other in rapid succession from the Alleghenies, crossing the broad and luxuriant valley beyond, and pressing the frontier farther and still farther west, are pitching their tents at the base of the Rocky Mountains. But no obstacle can stay the impetuosity, or arrest the march of this marvellous movement, and those eternal barriers of rock and snow, where nature seems to have established her most impregnable barrier, have been forced, and countless legions are deploying into the fertile plains beyond.

Glorious indeed has been, and still is the march of this mighty army of civilization. No smoking ruin, no shrieking desolation, no wail of despair, or cry of injured innocence, marks its progress; the blessings of millions of happy homes are resting in peace on its banners; its march is timed by the grand harmonies that swell up from the proud hearts and exultant hopes of thirty millions of freemen; green fields and fertile landscapes, dotted with the farm house and embroidered with all the ensigna of cultivated life, start into being at each manouvre of its forces; a thousand thriving villages and bustling towns fortify its rear; proud cities, with glittering spires, sparkling domes, busy mart, and thronged exchange, mark each halting place, and the rattle of the engine, with its ponderous train, is the reveille that calls each soldier to his duty. Cities, towns, and villages, the rattling factory and the

busy workshop, the browsing herd and the abundant harvest spring forth like magical creations at its footfall. Never before was the progress of a people conducted with such amazing expansion and bewildering velocity. Never were the phenomena of the national life attended with such wondrous results. States, which formerly were the slow and doubtful growth of centuries, under the matchless energies of our nationality, are the product of a few years, and crowned with the lofty honors of sovereignty, are moving up in stately procession to take their places in the grand confederacy.

Society is accomplishing prodigies here, of which antiquity, in the boldest flights of her poetic fancy, never once caught the most distant resemblance. All this is justly a source of pride, and not to be discouraged. But how stands the Individual in relation to all this? What position does the mere *man* hold amid the ten thousand hosannas that are ever pealing forth in honor to these stupendous developments? Do these phenomena leave him undisturbed in the scale of importance? Does he take into proper account himself, his own dignity, importance and position? Does the public mind, as it gazes in rapture on these majestic and imposing scenes, pay homage to the Individual, who is greater than all these; who "was made but a little lower than the angels," who is the crowning point of all God's creation, and for whose service and end, the machinery under whose auspices these phenomena are conducted, was devised, and for whose personal development, expansion, and advancement, civilization itself displays, under God, her wonderful outgoings. Is it true, that with these majestic and striking objective forces around, to challenge admiration and inspire reverence, he will turn from them, to weigh the importance, and estimate the value of the priceless jewels that lie in his own being? Do men, as often as they should, as they look upon this swelling stream of life, bearing on its bosom the gigantic capacities, stupendous issues and high problems of a civilization or society, into which would seem to be crowded all the hopes and

interests of humanity, consider the still nobler capabilities, still higher issues, and profounder problems, that lie wrapped up in their own several individual existences, and acknowledge that for the proper illustration and solution of them, these amazing scenes under Providence are going forward? Is there no reason to fear that the proud and crested billows that roll in such measured majesty across this ocean of life, may not receive more of our admiration than the causes which impel them, and the purposes that shape their course, may share in our regard? And shall we be censured for insisting that unless along with this amazing expansion and velocity of social power, this marvellous exaltation of national life, there be a corresponding development and exaltation of individual importance, the displays of our national energy may be wonderful indeed, but hideous deformity will haunt its yet maturer manifestations, and gloat over its old age in the preponderating strength and exclusive development of but one side of man's nature.

We need not stop here to inquire into the agencies by which the results we have just been contemplating are accomplished, and whether in their subordinate relations, they each tend to produce the evils we dread. It is sufficient in this view of our subject to know that these phenomena exist; that their importance is ever magnified by that seductive spirit that is ever exalting something beyond and objective to the soul, and that they cannot, ought not, to be assailed from any quarter, which seems to arm them with a triple power to consummate the evils we have been suggesting. There are, however, other conditions of the public mind, deep rooted and fixed, whose daily and hourly operations are marked by a direct antagonism to the principle of Individuality. The national heart is throbbing with impulses which carry within the most fatal and destructive consequences that can well be conceived of, to every just conception of Individual dignity and importance, and a total blindness to every just view to its relations with society.

Party spirit, which comprehends the length and breadth of our land, furnishes a broad and undisputed field for the direct offensive operations of the principle of social despotism. Here the principle of absorption reigns in absolute, undisputed supremacy; its contrivances to insure a complete subjugation of the Individual, to crush out every sentiment of esteem and regard for him, in the public mind, are of the utmost fitness. The entire system of party tactics is made to contribute to the power, and enlarge the operations of social despotism. The man, who once comes fully under the influences of party drill, (and how few are there who can be said to be beyond it!) must make instant and complete surrender of his own self-reliance and independence, as far as the objects of the association are concerned. He must adjust his sentiments, measure his thoughts, shape his expressions, weigh his opinions and define the scope of his activity in politics, by the lines, rules and formulae, published by the majority.

He must acquiesce without a murmur, in the authority of conventions, and do their bidding with cheerful alacrity; he must give o'er his long cherished thoughts, his most well considered principles, change his opinions, and ignore, it may be, a public history at the beck or nod of a caucus. The doings at the capitol, if his party happen to be in power, are holy things to him ; they are just as much articles of faith as any article in the creed. Before these, conventions, majorities and caucuses, bow in servile submission. The partizan never views them as propositions about which he may make up an opinion of his own, but receives them in implicit faith as they reach him ; and if there is any individual activity displayed in the case at all, it exhausts itself in employing the arguments of the White House, in defending them, if any one feels himself bound, in the same way, under the influences of an opposite drill, to assail them. The politician (and who is not one?) cannot say his thoughts are his own. He has long since paid these over as the price of his membership, and he never dreams of violating his contract. Mohammed, in his boldest dreams of

consolidated and centralized power, never saw a more abject servitude of mind and heart than this. The partisan may flatter himself all the while that he is an independent man. He may swagger in a bastard courage and boast about certain "inalienable rights," among which is the liberty of speech and the independence of thought. He may make a show of manhood, when no danger is at hand; but when the hour of trial draws nigh, if the servile habitudes of his soul will ever permit one, the doubtful and anxious struggle between the attachments of party and the convictions of duty, bears witness to the iron strength of the fetters with which the spirit of party binds up the individual.

Not only do the habitudes of thought acquired in connection with such associations, and the strength of party affections, ever cling round the Individual to subordinate his will and subjugate his reason to a power beyond him; but the independence of his thought and will is subjected to another equally powerful influence, and the despotism of party spirit fully discloses itself in the universally endorsed tactics of party drill, systematically employed to enforce the authority of party against the suggestions of duty, and the convictions of individual thought. Does a man, in spite of the influences that have operated upon him with all the power of law, feel the strong appeals of duty and independence, resisting the trammels with which public opinion and party discipline have encompassed him, rend his chains asunder, and stand forth in the arena of politics with the royal robes of manhood drawn up in princely style around him, armed with the sceptre of principle and crowned with the laureate of truth, his position is the signal for the hootings of the mob, the scorn of the multitude, the frowns of power, and the vindictive fury of a partisan press. His conduct is esteemed a species of apostacy, whose historical similitude is to be found in the treachery of Judas Iscariot, or the treason of Benedict Arnold. The howlings of an infuriated party break in deafening peals around him, follow him in his declining years and go echoing along the distant con-

fines of age. Thus are the promptings of individual conviction made to yield before the growing strength of party zeal and the suggestions of duty to recoil before the accumulating influence and importance of majorities. Thus is the public mind trained and schooled in the despotism of party associations and an importance and supremacy conceded, by an alarming unanimity, to a social power, before which the attributes of individuality must drivel into insignificance. The individual is absorbed in his party. Upon its altars he resigns his own independence and some of his most important obligations to his fellows, and to his country. What is to be hoped from a people who will adjust their intellectual and moral armor for the strifes of politics before such bonfires as these? And what is all this but *centralization leavening the masses?*

It cannot be expected that a people so accustomed to such training, can confine their habits of thought and modes of action to the sphere of partizan activity. The reigning power must be expected to be copied, and we turn with alarm to other quarters, and find the operations of the same principle busy with all our interests as a people.

The sanctions of law itself, projected to guard individual rights, are coming to be held in light esteem, and these powerful and venerated defences of life and property have too often been made to yield before the pressure of an inflamed public opinion, whose excitements reaching the judge upon the bench, or the jury in their box, compel them to yield to its demands. It was but yesterday, too, that men, instigated by evils that afflicted the body politic, organized a social power for their extermination, before whose irresponsible might the Constitution and Laws of a State, behind which lay all the securities and guarantees of individuality, went down like chaff before a driving tempest, and we were called on in a land, where trust in law is the beating heart and thinking head of government, to witness a spectacle where the Individual was torn from the defences of the law, dragged out from his strong entrench-

ments and exposed in his weakness to the terrible and irresponsible fury of a social power whose despotism sickened the very heart of humanity. That this display of social despotism, however, only seemed to familiarize the public mind with its horrors, and prepare it for a repetition of the same horrors, may be seen in the fact that one of our largest cities lately followed the example.

Let public sentiment continue to exalt, at the expense of the Individual, a civilization whose ruling phenomena are the material displays that adorn its bosom and most arrest the public wonder; let the energies of the national life continue to be appropriated to the attractions of that grand saturnalia, where the public mind drinks deep the draughts of partisan rancors,—draughts whose intoxications are drawn from the countless streams that ever trickle from the stricken heart of Individual Freedom, and where it grows mad over the wild carnival of irresponsible power—a carnival whose revelry is intensified by each new outrage on man, that feeds the hungry avidity of its revelers: and then let the national heart beat high and quick under the unnatural excitements produced by struggles for a political power, whose distinctions open only to the hand hardened by the greedy grinding of gain, or tainted by the palmings of bribery, and whose patronage too often wait on the drivellings of effeminacy; let the national heart become tempered and toned by impulses such as these, and it needs no pen of inspiration to write the word of doom that shall record the ultimate history of such a people.

But it does not rest here. The organization of many benevolent associations among us, is in many instances attended by large exactions on the Individual quite as destructive to a healthy and manly development of his powers, as some of the displays we have just been considering. Men are too apt to regard only the good ends to be accomplished, where the means employed do not violate law or morality, and seldom consider in such cases whether the means employed may not in the end produce calamitous

results far outreaching in the end, the good to be reached in invoking them. We, therefore, find societies formed for the accomplishment of almost every benevolent and charitable object which can address itself to the sympathies of the human heart; many of which demand sacrifices and tribute from the individual who is subject to their rule, and all of which undertake to define the limit and objects of his charities, or sympathies, or hold out the promise of pecuniary considerations, as a reward for the execution of benevolence and a motive to membership. And it is a question by no means free from doubt whether the separation of the design or conception from the execution of philanthropic or benevolent interest: the first the business generally of the head,—the last the duty of the general body; and whether systems, that seem to satisfy the consciences of men, in the discharge of all their charitable obligations, by a mere conformity to the established rules of some society, perhaps the payment of "monthly dues"—whether this transfer of our conceptions and obligations of charity to the shoulders of some society, may not have the effect to transform these living and touching graces of our nature into cold, dead, marbled-visaged formalities. Persons too imagine that they behold the utter failure of all the means established under Providence to rescue humanity from the evils incident to life and filled with philanthropy, and overflowing with sympathy and benevolence, undertake the reorganization of society itself. The public is called on to make surrender of certain natural rights for the good of the new order. These calls are never unanswered. Thousands flock to the standard thus set up by some new Moses in the wilderness, surrender their personal accountability and dignity, limit the scope of their individuality, no longer the honored promptings of reason and will, trained by religion in obedience to the freedom of Heaven's laws, but by the narrow lines and small circles of some school of disgusting fanaticism. These associations take under their control not only the direction of personal sympathies and charities, but in many instances assume the management

of industry and labor, the direction of personal enterprise, and control of personal energy. Many of the institutions existing under the sanctions of government too are considered improper, and social organizations are promoted to operate against them, in defiance of the admitted sanctions of the law, thus daily arraying the Individual in bitter hostility against that which experience and history teach us, is the only bulwark of man against the aggressions and oppressions of society.

The passion for reforming society at the expense of all proper regard for the individual, has been lately pushed in another direction, and the vast powers of the State and the machinery of Government have been invoked to aid in the accomplishment of objects laudable and proper in themselves, men unfortunately, in their zeal for humanity, never considering that they have called the State to trench upon the rights and principles of man.

"Public welfare" is always the ready excuse for any such inroad, and it has come to be considered (if indeed it was ever regarded differently), to mean anything which society may demand for her interest, it matters not at what sacrifice of the Individual.

For the "Public welfare" the State assumes the province of regulating the desires and appetites of the people, superintending their habits, directing the affairs of our families, invading by her agents our houses, quarterly it may be, or as often as it may suit the taste and fancy of some majority-made constable, making public journey with bailiff and posse, from garret to cellar, through parlor and pantry, prying into sideboards, overhauling wardrobes, uncorking bottles, and beating out barrel bungs, in a word, violating all the consecrations and sanctities of our homes. This surrender of natural right, this desecration of time honored privacy is claimed by society, in order to depopulate her alms houses, and deliver her jails, and I must submit to the exorbitant exaction, because another has been leading a life destructive to his own and his family's honor, and injurious to the interests of society. What account

do your Maine Liquor Laws take of personal accountability? Do they thus keep ever before the Individual the idea of personal responsibility, address his manhood, appeal to his reason or punish him alone who has outraged decency or humanity? We ask the State by these means to police us, because our neighbor has degraded himself, Society finding it more convenient, like the pedagogue of old, to discipline the whole household than to search out the real offender. We ask the State by these means to protect us against ourselves, to assume the care and direction of our household appointments, of our personal foibles and weaknesses, interests which our forefathers in their simplicity thought belonged to each man for himself, and in the proper or improper conduct of which, even we, despite the *shifting of the responsibility*, still continue to regard ourselves entitled to honor or shame, as the case may turn out.

What is all this but a virtual surrender to the State of our own regards for ourselves, our personal dignity and accountability! What is it other than a dishonorable evasion of the high and solemn duties of prudence and temperance, which each man owes to himself and to his Creator? What but the cowardly resort of passion and appetite to disown the hideous deformities that gloat over an unmanly indulgence in their demands? And is it not, on the other hand, investing the State with an alarming power? Pushing her powers and operations far out beyond their legitimate sphere, and transforming her into the agent of society, to do her bidding by a flagrant outrage on the rights of the Individual, before which the genius and policy of our old common law must recoil in broken and shattered fragments. Should a Legislature at any time, when beset with petitions on such an subject, hesitate before it strike the brave old heart of that time-honored system of law, which has for ages so well and jealously guarded the rights of the Individual, which has existed as the bulwark of his safety and protection through centuries of peril and struggle; which has stood between him and the frowns of his tyrant and the lash of his despot, and lifted him out of

the dust and blood of oppressive power; should any one hesitate on any such occasion, there will always be found some one who will quiet these compunctions by proposing yet another step in the process of social despotism, and refer the existence of some of the most valued rights and time-honored sanctities of the Individual to the test of a mere numerical majority of the people. With our gravest reflections we can recognize no difference in the principle assumed in such laws as these, with that which characterized the sumptuary laws of the Grecian tyrant and against which even the Grecian heart rebelled. It places too high an estimate on the interests of society, and tends to lessen the importance, and impair the dignity of the Individual by withdrawing from him the control and responsibility of his personal habits, and placing them under the protection of the State. It places the rights and privileges of the man too much at the mercy of the tastes and caprice of the multitude; gives us no assurance that that which is ours to-day, may not become the property of the community to-morrow, through the magic of "Public Welfare." It creates an uneasiness, lest from telling us what we shall not keep in our houses, what we shall not drink, what we shall not purchase, the State may go on and tell us what we shall not wear, or what we shall not read. It arouses the suspicion, that if the State is acting legitimately thus for the "Public Good," directing the economy of our homes, and the appointment of our families, she may some day adopt the fancy, as she did in Greece, of limiting the expenditure of our means, defining the color of our cloth, and establishing the style of our garments; or under the same false view, rob our hearts of some of their dearest objects of earthly affection and endearment.

But other influences, looking to an absorption of Individuality, and a concentration of power, are busy in our midst. Men talk and think more and more about popularizing our Institutions, of reducing Government more directly under the influences of majorities, of rendering it still more pliant to the voice of society, of defining the

scope of its operations, marking the limitations of its power and departments more immediately by the *will of the people*. It has grown quite fashionable of late to regard government as the *agent of society*, to do her bidding in all things, as existing for her protection alone, and that its operations and measures are only legitimate when found to be in exact conformity with what society may deem to be her interests, which too often is but the suggestion of her passion or caprice. It rarely enters into the mind of such men to consider, that, in the establishment of government there was involved the idea of protecting the Individual from the injustice of society, or guarding him against the despotism of majorities. To assert that government exists as a restraint on the will of the majority, would be regarded by your blatant and reigning demagoguism, as the most unexampled hardihood ; it would awake the howlings of the war-dogs of all parties, and open the whole artillery of the partisan press.

Majorities are quite too sacred to be spoken of in that way ; they must control and limit government and law. "It would be monstrous if the people could not do what they like," was the sentiment of the Grecian slave, and is the motto of the American republican. True, majorities or the people, have outraged justice and liberty, destroyed the defences of life, and the protections of property, trampled down the rights of man and enslaved him, but then they were majorities, sacred and holy still. It is true, too, that our forefathers carefully and jealously guarded the Individual from encroachments arising from precisely such a quarter as this. They restrained society by fundamental laws, by solemn constitutions ; guarded the citizen by bills of rights, which they fondly hoped would stand forever between the liberties of the Individual and the will of the majority, and thus established government, not as the agent of either, *but as a check upon the despotism of society or majorities, and the lawlessness of the Individual*. Yet all this is nothing before the supreme attributes with which the public mind has invested majorities. Government is established to ascertain,

enforce and perpetuate the rights of the Individual ; to secure his healthy and proper development ; to promote all his interests by restraining his passions, and, at the same time, holding in check the passions of society. But there has ever been a tendency in *government itself* to encroach on the rights of both Society and the Individual. To guard against that, our forefathers carefully limited the action of government itself ; they divided its powers, distributed them under distinct heads and separate departments, whose several operations were defined with the utmost accuracy and whose separate independence, one of the other, was thought to be carefully secured. They provided against centralization of power, by balancing against the accumulation of power in one department, a well adjusted co-equal power in another ; they checked the operations of a third by its coördinate in a fourth. They divided the powers of the several departments themselves, and most carefully and explicitly defined the operations of the whole. But of what avail is all this, when majorities can sweep off the entire complex fabric at one blow ? When if they cannot change the law, which has been placed beyond their reach, they can change the judge who is to interpret that law, or through the more popular departments of government remove an officer who stands between him and their passion. Of what avail are all these jealous and cautious provisions, if the genius that projected and pervaded them lies bleeding or lifeless on the stupendous altar of social despotism ? Ever keeping in view the principle of Individuality, in thus, as we have seen, adjusting and framing the State governments, our forefathers went one step farther. They established one General Government, to guard the rights, preserve the existence, ensure the independence and promote the interests of the several State sovereignties, as well against the encroachments of majorities here, as against the assaults of foreign power. And into that Federal scheme they carried, with still more precision and care, the cautious divisions of power, of checks and balances, that distinguish the State sovereignties. They limited the

scope of its operations most plainly by the views of security, peace, and protection to the State; in providing for the general good, its power was never intended to reach beyond the object of protecting the State sovereignty.

With these wise precautions, having reference to the sad lessons read in the history of other people, and the melancholy consequences of a concentration of power, this complex system of ours was established. Time admonishes us, that we cannot follow the course of history in examining the departures from the spirit and letter of this system, which have marked the practical operations of the Federal Government, and to eliminate the principle that controlled these departures. We can but give a general indication by presenting one example.

Under the very first Congress that assembled under the Constitution of the Federal Government, an Act, after a severe, protracted and bitter struggle, was passed, whose operations have tended, and are still tending, to a large degree, to destroy the relation of co-equals and co-ordinates between the Federal and State Governments, and to subordinate the sovereignty of the States to the very power projected to preserve them in all their force and vigor. The 25th section of the celebrated Judiciary Act of 1798, by which the Supreme Court of the United States was invested with an appellate jurisdiction over final judgments or decrees of the higher Courts of law or equity of the several States, in cases therein enumerated, is admitted, even by the friends of the measure, to have placed the highest Courts of the several States, so far as the cases extend, in the attitude of inferior tribunals to the Supreme Court of the United States, and to have established the same relations between them that exist between the inferior Federal Courts and the Supreme Court. This centralizing Act, which is believed to have violated the most solemn obligations of constitutional integrity, was sought to be excused, and is still defended on the ground of preventing a clashing of authority; of providing against the collision of diverse but co-equal powers; of preserving harmony between coör-

dinate branches, and establishing uniformity of decisions. All this looks very fair and plausible, especially when put upon the footing of harmonizing the action of coördinate and co-equal powers.

The peace and prosperity of the country, the "Public Welfare," again demanded a sacrifice of Individual rights, and after a bitter, but unavailing struggle, that sacrifice was extorted. But how, in the case before us, was that harmony secured? What means were employed for its establishment? Only by weakening the vigor of one of the coördinate and co-equal departments. The clashing of authority was prevented by curtailing one of the separate, independent branches of its authority, and transferring its attribute of sovereignty to another. To prevent the collision of diverse powers, one of the powers was shorn of its strength, and subordinated to another. The case in hand proceeded upon the assumption that the Federal Government was a supreme or superior power, and an utter disregard of the fundamental truth, *that divisions of power are necessary as protections to liberty, and securities to law;* and further that these divisions of power cannot be disturbed without violence to at least the spirit of the instrument that creates them. And it is already a question of no little magnitude, whether the advantages expected to be derived from an uniformity of decision, are not all counteracted by the mischievous tendencies and results, growing out of the precedent then established on the destruction, in an important particular, of the relations intended to be established between the State and Federal governments. True the liberties of no man was cloven down by that act, the iron hand of oppression grappled with no man's rights, but the solemn guaranties which the genius of the constitution threw around the sovereignty of the individual State were impaired, and the importance and authority of the State was lessened by the very power that had been created to protect it against the encroachments of others. The Federal government had triumphed in her first collision with the States, had gone off victor, crowned with a

portion of their sovereignty, not granted in the distribution of powers. The forces of centralization had displayed themselves in their most seductive form, and left their traces on the topmost pillars of the whole fabric. The indignant protests and affectionate remonstrances of Individual right, were unavailing in the presence of the suggestions of "Public Welfare," or public selfishness.

The argument employed then is begining to be applied on almost every occasion, when there arises a dispute growing out of the relations we have been contemplating, and there is a growing sentiment adverse to the pretensions of the States. We are told, very plainly, that this division of power will not do; that this distribution of sovereignty, these limitations on the several departments, this diversity of authority is producing embarrassing checks on the salutary operations of the Federal government, that it tends to cripple and cramp its vigor, to weaken its resources, producing conflicts of sovereignty and clashings of interest. Men will have the whole scheme popularized, and simplified, never reflecting that the surest guaranties against the oppressions of power, or the march of despotism lie in the divisions of that power and the complexity of Government.

Practically we do popularize and simplify the system. In our thoughts and political habitudes we do destroy that admirable division of power, and distribution of sovereignty, projected by our forefathers, as great bulwarks, and a succession of defences, behind which they deemed that man, in all time to come, might entrench his Individuality, defend his rights, and be shielded from the aggression of power, coming from any quarter whatever. We have long since, as a people, ceased to regard the Federal government as even an equal power in our system, or to reflect on her character and meaning, as moulded and shaped by her derived or delegated powers. We associate her in our mind with the idea of vast power, invest her with some supreme and controlling attributes, beneath which the State governments must bend as subordinate powers. Her

immense revenue, her splendid appointments, her seductive and queenly patronage, her dazzling honors, and lucrative positions, appealing as they do, to the reigning power of the national heart, wealth, are ever enlisting the affections and passions of the people ; exaggerating her importance in public interest, and exalting her power in the public mind. Her armies have vindicated our national honor, and illustrated our national might on the red field of battle ; her seamen have sustained them on the slippery decks of our vessels ; her commerce has carried our flag and name to every clime under the whole heavens, and brought us back the wealth of every country ; her jurisdiction spans a continent, its shadows are resting on the Isthmus, touching the neighboring isles of the ocean, and stretching northward are reaching beyond the St. Lawrence. Oceans limit her domain, her throne is high up in the adorations and affections of the people, her jewelry are the diadems of sovereignty. What is little Rhode Island, or Delaware in the presence of this exaggerated expansion and almost boundless stretch of power and patronage ; this dazzling, captivating display of government, whose seductive honors are ever intoxicating the public mind, and concentrating the passions of the people upon it. Co-equal and coördinate indeed under the constitution, but smaller, infinitely smaller in the hearts and estimation of the people. In a conflict, need it be asked, which shall yield, before the irresistible pressure of public opinion ? The constitution indeed stands there, but alone, to guard them with its integrity against the supreme and alarming attributes with which popular favoritism has crowned the Federal government. But what shall that avail, when the demands of the ruling passion shall be gratified, by bringing that constitution still nearer to the majority, and placing it under that control ; or what shall it avail even now, if the public mind is prepared, as on other occasions, to sanction the destruction of the divisions of powers, and the violations of constitutional guaranties. Let the people continue to bow down and worship the Golden Image, thus set up by the supreme

power of public will ; let the national heart withdraw its trust for the defences of life, peace and liberty, placed by our forefathers in the State sovereignties ; let this exaggeration of the importance of majorities, this blind passionate exaltation of their virtue and supremacy, let these influences go on unchecked, until rising higher and higher in the public mind, majorities shall overshadow even the constitution itself, and who will say that our own day shall not witness the triumphant march of *centralization* over the divisions of authority, the distributions of power, the checks and balances, the cautious modifications of power and well defined departments, projected far out by the jealous spirit of Individuality, to guard our several rights, and define and vindicate our several liberties.

It may take years before the sad results of the growing popular passions will display themselves in undisguised centralization. It may take years before they can occupy all the defences that stand distributed in such admirable perfection and order around the Individual ; but unless checked they must sooner or later produce their bitter fruits. We may slumber on in the arms of our fancied security, like the strong man of old, in the embrace of his faithless mistress, "all unconscious that the fingers and shears of a Delilah are busy with the locks and tresses of our national strength." The ordinary exigencies of the national life may not for years demonstrate to the public mind the preserving energy, and protecting power which the stalwart vigor and manly developments of Individuality display ; but there are times, and none may tell their coming in the rapid succession of events, ever rising around and about us, when the sternest and loftiest habitudes of Individuality, the purest instincts of *personal freedom* and responsibility, the severest convictions of *Individual duty* and the clearest apprehension and acknowledgment of *Individual accountability*, shall be necessary to the defences of the peace and liberties of the people. The mere forms of government will not be enough. *A pure and vigorous vitality must ever inform all its parts and shape all its actions.*

Behold the proud old oak ! Ages have passed away,

generations have come and gone like the shifting shadows of a summer's noon, since its dark green pulp first pierced the moulds of earth. The storms of a hundred winters have whistled through its branches, the droughts of a hundred summers have been round its roots, and their scorching suns on its leaves; it has battled proudly with the dashing fury and wild carnivals of a hundred tempests, and yet crowned with the green glories of its spreading leaves and majestic in the strength of its expanding branches, it stands the pride, the glory, the monarch of the forest. But silent decays have been steadily at work in its stout old heart, inconsiderable corruptions have been growing with its growth and eating away its strength, and when some driving tempest tosses its narled branches to the skies, and beats in wildness on its brave and aged trunk, it falls dishonored in the dust, with the decays and hollowness of its heart all exposed.

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and any other theological periodical unconnected with the modern church, either in name or character, and I am sure no modification of such has been the case—now, why are the W. & S. not entitled to be considered as unconnected with the same?

Ast. IV.—THE INCARNATION.*

JESUS CHRIST is the author and finisher of faith, the only but all-sufficient Saviour of mankind, yea, the Restorer of all things, both in heaven and on earth (Eph. 4: 10; Col. 1: 20). Too much attention can, therefore, not possibly be devoted to the study, which has for its object a correct, i. e., a scriptural view and knowledge of Him. If in other matters of faith the Bible ought to be the *highest* authority and *last appeal*, it must be in the case in question the *only* one. The Scriptures alone must be heard and interpreted by themselves. Taking the Bible, then, for our guide and our only guide, and fully aware of the infinite importance of the subject, we shall attempt to reproduce in our consciousness the picture which the Bible has drawn of Jesus Christ. We set out with or rather choose for our text the words of the disciple, whom Jesus loved, in which he sums up in the prologue to his gospel the very quintessence of Christian faith : the Word became flesh (*o Λόγος σαρξ ἐγένετο*). If we intended to treat this text analytically, we should probably say, 1) Who is *Λόγος* here spoken of ? 2) What is meant by the predicate nominative *σαρξ* ? 3) How have we to understand in this connection the copulative verb *ἐγένετο*? But premising, that on items 1 and 2 there is no real difference of opinion, we shall say only a few words on them and devote our whole attention to the third item, since we are of opinion, that the formulas of faith of the orthodox Churches of Christendom do not exactly teach on this subject, what we understand the Bible to teach.

We say, therefore, that we understand here by the *Λόγος*

* As the MUNCHENBURG Review is designed to be a medium for the free expression of various shades of Theological opinion, we give place to this earnest and interesting discussion on The Incarnation ; but think it proper at the same time to say, that we can not concur with the learned and respected author in some of his views on the christology of the Reformed Church and of orthodox creeds in general.—Eds.

spoken of as having become flesh, the *Λόγος* spoken of as the subject in John 1: 1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with (*πρὸς*—toward) God and the Word was God. This language we understand to teach, that the Logos is true and eternal God, of the same substance with the Father. The article being applied, however, to the Father alone (*οὐ Θεός*), we infer therefrom, that there is some difference between the Father and the Son, not only hypostatically, but also *ad rem*. This *Λόγος* being called in other passages of Scripture the Son of God (e. g., John 5: 26), in others the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, yea not only the apostles, but Christ himself frequently calling the Father not only *his Father*, but also *his God* (1 Cor. 11 and 15, John 20: 17, etc.): we infer from this uniform language of Scripture, that although the Son is of *the same substance* with the Father, as all the terms applied to him clearly indicate, yet there must be a certain kind of dependence, which the Son sustains to the Father. In John 5: 26, Jesus tells us expressly, that it is the Father who gives to the Son to have life in himself, while there is, to the best of our knowledge, no passage in the whole Bible, which inverts this relation, saying that the Son gives to the Father to have life in himself. (Why we translate here the Greek aorist *εδόθη* by *gives* instead of *gave*, will fully appear when we come to treat of the incarnation itself. Here we beg leave merely to say, that the Father's giving life to the Son and the reciprocal act of the Son, of receiving life from the Father, must necessarily be eternal, resting on the relation which Father and Son sustain to each other; for to suppose, that the Father's giving to the Son to have life in himself, is a solitary, transient act, would introduce a change, over which he has no control, into the very being of the Son, subject him to time and make him in reality a creature. We can not look, therefore, upon this act of the Father's giving to the Son to have life in himself, as a mere act of his will and good pleasure (the Almighty can not *create* a being Almighty like himself, that is, *undo* himself), but we

must view it as a physical act at the same time, i. e., as an act founded also upon his nature, as in God liberty and necessity, which in one conception exclude each other, are intimately united. If one more remark on this subject is necessary, we would merely say, that Jesus, speaking of his preëxistent state, always says, that he was with the Father, never, that the Son was with him (see John 17 : 5). The Lord ascribes to himself a relation to the Holy Ghost, different from his relation to the Father; he speaks of the Spirit as being sent by him; yea, he claims a joint relationship with the Father to the Spirit, which the Father *alone* sustains with regard to himself (the Son). Thus he says, (John 16: 15) : "All things that the Father has, are mine, and he (the Holy Ghost) shall take of mine and show it unto you." This is the highest prerogative ascribed to the Son in the Scriptures, to wit: the joint breathing of the Holy Ghost by the Father and the Son, on the strength of which act the Latin Church has always correctly maintained against the Greek Church, that the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and the Son. Yet in that very connection the Saviour says (John 14 : 28) : "My Father is greater than I." (To refer this remark of Christ to his humanity, is to make him say simply what no one in his sound mind will doubt, nor can have doubted, for even a moment, that the *man* Jesus was inferior to the Supreme God!) We deem it scarcely necessary to add here, that on the strength of these grounds we ascribe *aseity* to the Father alone, consequently neither to the Son nor to the Holy Ghost. This God-Logos now, we are told, became flesh. By flesh we mean here not merely the material part of man, his body, but the form of human existence, the law of humanity, and John says, consequently the same thing that Paul means, when he says, (Phil. 2: 6, 7): He took upon himself the *form of a servant* and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in the fashion of a man, etc.; in other words, the Logos became a man, a real and true man to all intents and purposes. He shared all the wants and peculiarities of human nature, sleep, hunger, food, rest, being circumscrib-

ed, the ignorance of a child, grief and joy, obnoxiousness to temptation, in short all the *aθeua* of our nature. It is not temptation itself, not the having of a natural will, but the following out of this natural will, which constitutes sin. Nor is this *aθeua*, exclusively the consequence of the sin of our progenitors; many of its ingredients belong to the being of human nature, but have been fearfully increased by the introduction of sin into it. But sin itself is no ingredient of our nature; it was wanting before the fall and is removed again by a perfect appropriation of the objective work of Jesus Christ. It is, for this reason, not at all necessary to assume, in order to constitute Christ the Saviour of mankind, that he took upon himself our *fallen* nature, while the whole tenor of the Scriptures concerning Christ forbids this assumption altogether. Jesus calls himself very often the *Son of man*; this certainly means, that he was a man in a peculiar sense, in which no one else was; he realized the idea of humanity, and what the whole race is destined for, and what will be accomplished by its sanctified position, was accomplished by Jesus individually, to wit: He became the abode of the fulness of the Deity; for even on earth he could say, that whoever saw him, saw the Father. God and man are, to a certain degree, reciprocal; without the incarnation the idea of humanity would not have been fully realized, even not without the fall, by one individual; and God could not have given a complete revelation concerning himself to mankind without the incarnation. For these, and other reasons, we say, unhesitatingly, that the Logos in becoming man, took upon himself our *original nature*, which was, as we know from the Scriptures, and by experience, capable of sinning or resisting temptation.

Our Lord's divinity was systematically denied by Arius and his followers, on grounds, however, different from those on which the Ebionites had denied it; in the days of the Reformation by the two Socini and their followers, who now pass by the name of Unitarians; his humanity was denied in one form or other by the Gnostics, some of

whom said, that Christ had no real body, consequently no really human wants,—could not, and did not suffer; others again maintained that if he had a real body, it was of an ethereal nature, brought down from heaven, (so the knight Schwenkfeld,) since in the opinion of these men, matter is intrinsically evil and every contact with it corrupting; others, led by Cerinthus, taught, that Jesus was born like other men, was, indeed, not sinless, but wiser, and better than others, and as a reward of his moral excellency the high Aeon, Logos or Christ, descended upon him at his baptism, taught, wrought miracles through him, but left him again, before he expired on the cross. The true humanity of Christ is, in our days, admitted on all hands, theoretically at least—whether practically also, we may see in the progress of our investigation. We come, now, to our *third* and main point, the incarnation of the Logos.

On this point two views are held by the orthodox Churches of the present time, the Lutheran and the Reformed. The Roman Catholic Church has introduced so many heterogeneous elements into her christology, that her Christ has but little in common with the Christ of the Bible, for which reason no notice is here taken of her doctrine on this all-important subject. The Lutheran and the Reformed view admit two distinct natures in Christ, a really divine and a really human nature, but here the agreement ends; the Lutherans maintained,* that by the *Communicatio idiomatum*—the reciprocal action of the two natures—the properties of one nature can truthfully be predicated of the other. According to this view the God-Logos was born. Mary is truly the mother of God, and Luther says, that Mary made soup and pap for God, and it was unhesitatingly affirmed, that the divine attributes, omniscience, omnip-

* We use the past tense, because most Lutherans of this country seem not even to know the true doctrine of their Church on this point, and of the eminent divines of that Church in Germany scarcely one accepts the teachings of the *Formula Concordia* on this subject as the exposition of his faith.

otence, etc., were communicated by the Logos to the human nature of Christ, even in his mother's womb, so that we have an omniscient child, a man Jesus possessed of all divine attributes, but by a free will of his own, not calling them forth during his pilgrimage on earth.

The Reformed view holds the two natures in Christ more apart, so that there is room left for a really human development of his human nature—growing in grace and in knowledge—which, however, is so intimately connected with the Logos, as to form one personality with him. Some of the Reformed standards express themselves on this point thus: “The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting from the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man’s nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin of her substance ; so that the two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ; very God and very man.” We are told here, that each of Christ’s two natures is perfect, the divine so as to constitute him very God, and the human so as to constitute him very man—and yet these two natures are said to constitute one personality, one person. Is this possible ? Is not this a self-contradiction ?

We are perfectly aware, that we are here on sacred ground ; but it is not forbidden, reviewing, as we do, not the language of inspiration, but the language of men, that were, however learned and good, fallible. If each of these two natures is so perfect, as to constitute the one a perfect God, and the other a perfect man,—and this is insisted upon in order to avoid the error of Euthy-ches, who taught, that Christ’s humanity was absorbed by his divinity, and thus made him an intermediate being, more than man and less than God—what, we ask, is the difference between *nature* and *person* ? Is a man, a real man, not a person ? What constitutes personality ? Is it not self-consciousness, the subject knowing itself, being conscious of itself, as the object, the blending of the subject and the object into one ? Now, without this human

self-consciousness, Christ would not have been a man, as is admitted on all hands, and if he had a human self-consciousness, how, then, did his human nature not constitute a human person? When off guard, the followers of this view admit this natural and logical inference unhesitatingly. All passages, that speak of Christ as a man, ascribe human actions, human wants to him, as hungering, thirsting, sleeping, being fatigued, etc., are at once referred to his human nature, because, as is confidently asserted, the divinity can neither suffer, nor hunger, nor thirst. And does the divine nature of the Saviour not constitute personality? God being *the* personality, Christ would, of course, not be God, without personality. When Christ says: "Before Abraham was, I am," (John 8: 58), it is unhesitatingly declared, that he speaks here of his divine, to the exclusion of his human nature. If now Christ can say of himself, *I* according to his divine, and *I* according to his human nature, one excluding the other, how, we ask, can *two persons* be *one person*? Again, Christ disclaims omniscience (Mark 13: 32). Now granting for a moment the dualistic assertion, that Christ speaks here of his human nature, how can one and the same person know and not know a thing at the same time? What kind of a union, then, is left between the Logos and the man Jesus? Is there a specific difference between the relation of the Logos to the man Jesus and that of the Holy Spirit to the prophets of old? Again, omnipresence is claimed for the divine nature of Christ (John 3: 18,) while his human nature is allowed to have been circumscribed; the Logos was, thus, the governor and upholder of the universe, while he was in the man Jesus on earth; but the Logos is in every man (John 1: 9): was his being in Jesus specifically different from that in every other human being? But not only this; had the Logos in Jesus a Logos-consciousness or not, and had the Logos or part of the Logos out of Jesus the same self-consciousness too? and how many Logoi were there?

Again, when Christ suffered, his divine nature either

suffered or did not. We are fully aware, what answer is given by the advocates of the system, which we are reviewing, to wit : that we are not aware of the amount of helps, which the Logos extended to the man Jesus in his sufferings—but does this suggestion meet the case? Was the Logos unable or unwilling to support the man Jesus, so that an angel had to come down from heaven to strengthen him? (Luke 22: 43); was the Logos unable to uphold the suffering humanity of Christ, so that he exclaimed : “ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? ” (Matth. 27: 46); or was it the Logos, who had forsaken the man Jesus ? (So Cerinthus and his Gnostic followers taught.) Again, why did Jesus command (deposit) his spirit into the hands of his Father? Was the Logos unable or unwilling to take care of it ? And if the divinity had nothing to do with Christ’s sufferings, or lent his human nature but so scanty a support, that an angel had to strengthen Jesus, that he had to complain of God having forsaken him, that he commended his spirit into the hands of his Father—what right have we to base upon his death the hope of the pardon of our sins ? Now if these questions, which are neither sophistical, nor far-fetched, but natural and necessary results of earnest religious thought, should be answered satisfactorily, the greatest service will be rendered to the cause of religion ; but if they are not, and cannot be satisfactorily answered, then it is not only lawful, but a sacred duty to examine the Scriptures closely, whether they really teach the premises of such conclusions. The cry : “ Mystery, mystery,” does not avail, as things may be mysterious, i. e., beyond our comprehension, without being contradictory to themselves or to sound reason. The necessary question then is : “ Do the Scriptures really teach this personal or hypostatical union, this Christ’s being made up of the Logos and the man Jesus; or is it an entirely different train of thought that is there presented to us ? ” The Logos *became* flesh—is this identical with: The Logos united himself personally or hypostatically with the man Jesus, conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the

Virgin Mary? If a crown prince, says Dr. Ebrard, in order to secure the liberty of his imprisoned brother, goes for a certain length of time into voluntary slavery, becomes a slave to all intents and purposes, retaining, however, his right to the crown of his father unimpaired, he can truthfully be called a prince and a slave—for he is both;—but who would dream of saying, that this prince had united himself with a slave—and this Nestorianism does—or that this slave prince is less than a prince and more than a slave, say a chamberlaine, which Eutychianism does? If this simile is applicable, and it seems to us to be so, in all its parts, except that the condition of slavery will be laid aside, while the incarnate Logos will forever retain the form of human existence: it is apparent at once, that the great error underlying both the Nestorianizing Reformed and the Eutychianizing Lutheran view is, that the Saviour's *human nature* is taken for *a concrete, for an individual, while it is a generality, the law of humanity, the human form of existence*, the *μορφὴ δούλου* into which the Logos entered.

We feel ourselves by no means under any obligation to explain the mystery of the incarnation—this is a mystery, and may remain so, for created intelligences, for eons to come—but what the Scriptures teach on it, we are bound to examine and believe. While the term *God-man* is, indeed, not biblical, but can be understood so as to convey biblical ideas, the view which gives us in Christ *a God and a man*, is certainly not taught in the Bible. We can speak of the *incarnate-Logos, of the man-Logos, of God manifested in the flesh*—not manifest in the flesh—but not of the Logos mysteriously united with the man Jesus, without our pressing the fact here that such a man Jesus, with whom the Logos could have united himself, did not exist at all, the Logos himself becoming Jesus. That we are correct in charging the Reformed view, as widely interpreted, at least, with being but an ill-disguised modification of Nestorianism, appears also from the fact, that it allows no more than Nestorianism did, the term *mother of God*. The fact that some Episcopal divines insist on calling Mary

θεοτοκος, by no means disproves our position, since they either use the term out of mere respect for antiquity and translate it: Bringer forth of God—thus making the term almost palatable to Nestorius himself,—or if they use the word in its natural sense, they abandon their own system.

The Lutheran view, however, is no better. If the child Jesus was omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, he was no human child, could not and did not grow in wisdom (Luke 2 : 52), and if not really human, he has not redeemed us; and even if this view is so modified as to involve the non-exercise of these divine powers or attributes, their mere possession in a quiescent state, so that Jesus could call them forth at any time, the case is not made any better, for it remains unintelligible, why Jesus prays to the Father, for the power of performing miracles, calls his doctrine his Father's doctrine, which he had been taught, etc. (see John 11 : 42, and especially Heb. 5 : 7). But if these divine attributes would not be called at any time into action, then they were suspended, for a time at least, and this nearly all Lutheran divines of Germany now admit in one way or other.

The Apollinarian view, which assigned to the Logos the place of the rational soul (*νους*) in the man Jesus, was for this reason false, because the Saviour without this *νους*, would not be a true and real man, consequently not our Redeemer.

By way of introduction to our development of what we conceive to be the doctrine of the Bible on this subject, we would say, that both the gospels and the epistles speak of Christ throughout as *one person*, leaving not the least room for any dualism, so that what is said of him will be applied by every unbiased mind to the whole Jesus, the Logos Incarnate. The favorite adage: This is said concerning the human nature of Christ, because, e. g., the Divinity cannot suffer—this of the divine nature, because, e. g., the human nature is younger than Abraham,—has no foundation in the word of God whatever.

In the next place we remark, that the New Testament

speaks in unmistakeable terms of three periods of the existence of the Logos, which distinction is almost entirely overlooked or lost sight of by the present christological consciousness of the Church. These three periods are : His antemundane state, reaching down to the incarnation ; his state of humiliation, reaching from that period till after his death ; his exaltation beginning from after his death—prior to his resurrection—for he raised himself and was consequently in the possession of all divine attributes at that time—and lasting throughout eternity. Christ himself refers to these three periods in John 17: 5 : "Father, glorify me with that glory, which I had with Thee before the world was." Christ here says in plain language, that at the time he offered the prayer, he was destitute of the glory which he once had had, and that he prayed to be clothed with it again. The main question here is, What was this glory, for which Christ prays ? Was it merely the garment of light, in which the Deity dwells, or was it the form of divine existence—the *μορφὴ Θεοῦ*—implying divine glory and divine attributes ?

Let us see what light the Scriptures throw on this subject. As soon as we know what this glory was, we know at once what Christ had laid aside, and what he was, in answer to his prayer, clothed with by his Father. In Hebrews 1: 3 we read : Who being the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person—and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. After his resurrection Christ says : All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth (Matth. 28 : 18). The government of the world was his, owing to his relation to the Father—in his earthly state he had not exercised it—after his resurrection he is clothed again with it : Does this authorize us to say, that the government of the world was part of the glory, which he had laid aside at his incarnation ? In John 17: 22 the *δόξα* evidently means internal holiness and v. 24 his majestic life in light; both these attributes the Logos may be supposed to have laid

aside at his incarnation, growing, indeed, every day more into this (divine) holiness, until he received it fully again at his exaltation. In Phil. 2, the Apostle inculcates the duty of humility: "Let the same mind be in you, that was in Christ Jesus," who although he was in the form of God, did not consider it *απταγμον*—res rapta (got by robbery, and, therefore, tenaciously to be retained) to exist in a manner equal to God;* but he emptied himself, took the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. In what view did this *κενωσις* consist? We have seen above, that two perfect natures in Christ would constitute two persona, as each includes self-consciousness and self-consciousness personality. If his divine self-consciousness is, therefore, incompatible with both the incarnation and his true humanity, does it not follow, that this *κενωσις* was a temporary laying aside of his divine self-consciousness, the voluntary act of the Logos of suffering this self-consciousness to be suspended for a limited period of time? And if so, all his divine attributes, whose exercise depends on the divine self-consciousness, were, of course, also suspended, not to be called into action before the divine self-consciousness was entered into again.

On this view every christological passage of the Scriptures becomes intelligible and fully harmonizing with all others; we have now a natural meaning for the words: The Word became flesh. Whatever truth there is in the common view, is here retained, and the many self-contradictions, which it involves, as pointed out above, are avoided. The *λογος κενωθεις* was, of course, as to his substance, God as much as ever, as a man remains the same man, although his self-consciousness is for some time suspended by one cause or another; the Logos becomes the son of man, i. e., *realizes* the idea of humanity, something that no other individual, even without the fall, could have accomplished; his Logos-substance exists for some time in the form of a rational soul, is developed in a

* Ιερ οντι ενας does not mean to be equal to God, but to exist in a manner equal to God; the pl. of the adj. has the force of the adv. *επος*.

really human way, and by leading a life of entire sinlessness becomes the abode of the Father, so that the man Jesus can say: He who sees me sees the Father. To this indwelling of the Father Jesus owes his power to perform miracles, his organic knowledge of divine things (comp. Matt. 11: 27 and John 3: 13).*

Jesus' life being a truly human life, it was a life of faith as well as of knowledge; on this supposition we can understand his obedience, his learning from or being taught by his Father, and even that mysterious exclamation, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The incarnate Logos loses sometimes the *knowledge* of his oneness with the Father, retains it, however, always by faith. In 2 Cor. 8: 9, we are told that Christ, who was—had been—rich, became poor for our sakes. This passage seems to us to be decisive on the meaning or extent of the *μενοντας*; for his humanity was never rich, could, consequently, not become poor, and his divine nature could not be said, without blasphemy, to be poor, as long as it was in the exercise or possession of a divine attribute; we say *an attribute*, as we conceive that one divine attribute implies all, and speaking of the Logos as having laid aside some of his prerogatives and attributes and retained others, is to say the least, unphilosophical; he must, consequently, since he was poor, have laid aside, for a certain length of time, his divine self-consciousness and together with it his divine attributes.

We could quote more passages to sustain our hypotheses, but deem it unnecessary—for if it is taught in one passage, it rests on a sufficiently firm basis; we will, therefore, refer

* The part. *ων*, in the latter clause of this verse must be translated by the past tense; for by translating it as the present tense, we have either to understand by heaven God—and this is too forced a construction—or we make the human nature of Christ omnipresent, which is altogether inconsistent with the Reformed view, while it would, indeed, agree with the Lutheran view, which, however, is as little supported by the teachings of the Bible; then, in John 6: 62, we have almost the same phraseology, and the past sense is in perfect keeping with the whole tenor of the argument, assigning the reason why the Son of man came down from heaven, because he had been there before his incarnation; there is, therefore, no tautology in the passage thus translated, as Ohlhausen ad locum supposes.

to John 5 : 26, to which attention was called before. We have said above, that the process of the Father's giving to the Son, to have life in himself, must necessarily be an eternal, unchangeable act, if the Son is to be God, an eternal giving on the part of the Father, and an eternal receiving on the part of the Son must take place; but Christ here uses the aor. *εδωκε*, because at the time he spoke of it, this process was suspended (for a limited period). The whole ocean of the Father's life no longer flowed over into the Son, but only isolated waves, such as his human form of existence admitted. Thus we get the very relation of Christ to the Father, which he ascribes to himself (John 6: 57) : "As I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." The believer, now, is entirely dependent on his Saviour—lives only in and through him—so Christ on earth lived in and through the Father, was entirely dependent upon him. Passages which would seem to be in opposition to this view, as John 5: 25, must be understood as referring, as they really do, to the exalted Saviour, as Christ himself expressly says, John 11: 41 and 12: 24. This exaltation of Christ took place between his death and resurrection, and 1 Peter 3: 18, probably refers to this event, where the dative *περιουσατ*: cannot be taken as dat. inst. *by the Spirit*, but as the dat. of dist. obj., *as to the Spirit, in the Spirit*. Here, then, we would say, the suspended self-consciousness of the Logos was restored (by the Father), the flow of the Father's fulness commenced again, and the exalted Saviour raises at once his own body.

This view will, as a matter of course, appear absurd to those who are persuaded beforehand that anything like a change in the Deity is impossible; their God is the God of the philosophers, that absolutely excludes all change, is far above the created world, has directly nothing to do with the creation or the government of the world, but attends to these matters through emanations, such as the Logos, Nous, Sophia and others—but this is not the Jehovah of the Old Testament, and much less the Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ. By making any change, that may take place in God, entirely dependent on God's own free will and purpose, we are of opinion that the Scripture doctrine of God's immutability and unchangeableness is fully adhered to. If this view is correct, and if the salvation of mankind and the restoration of the order of the universe, that had been disturbed by Adam's and Satan's sins, required this act of humiliation on the part of the Logos, and if the Logos was willing to submit to it, and the Father to accept it: he only can object to our view as impossible, that makes God's omnipotence less than his love. In Heb. 9:14, the Apostle tells us expressly, that Christ offered himself through the Eternal Spirit to God, and to offer himself is really the work of the spirit and not of the body—to hold still under God's judgments, to declare them righteous, even if it should come to a being forsaken of God, this is the nerve in the sacrifice, and not the mere bodily suffering. The objection, finally, that the government of the world, which was in the hands of the Logos anterior to his incarnation and which He laid aside at this act for about thirty-three years, must have stood still, according to the view presented here, rests on a mistaken notion of God's relation to the world and of that of the three persons of the Deity to each other. The Son's life is the Father's life; flows from the Father over into the Son, and by the same divine energy the world was governed during the suspension of that flowing over; and God the Father, must not be looked upon as being far above any contact with the world, as spending his time à la Epicureans, in enjoyment and idleness, since in Him we live, move and have our being—since he clothes the lilies and feeds the sparrows.

This, our view, on the central-mystery of Christianity as given in this article, may be wrong in some of its parts—its leading ideas we consider founded in the Scriptures; our objections against the Lutheran and Reformed views have undoubtedly some force; and the latter view, especially as it is generally understood, denies the incarnation, practically, at least; and for this reason we have ven-

tured to call the attention of the theological world to it, that it may receive more of that attention to which it is so eminently entitled, than has been of late years the case in our country. To these remarks we would add, that the ideas developed in our article are by no means original, although we have adopted them as ingredients of our faith. In a work "Die Lehre von der Person Christi entwickelt aus dem Selbstbewusstsein Christi und den Zeugnissen der Apostel von W. Fr. GESS," Basel, 1857, which we have translated into English, with a few modifications, and which will soon appear in print, the views and their ground, which are here but touched upon, will be given at full length.

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J. A. R.

ART. V.—THE INTERPRETATION OF THE PARABLE.

In the April number of the *Mercersburg Review* for 1856, we published an Article on the *Idea of the Parable*, and intended at the time to follow it by another on the *Interpretation of the Parable*; but other questions arising which seemed to claim prior attention at our hands, we were not able to carry out our purpose immediately. The subject was in consequence deferred. We proceed now to discuss it in the light of the *idea* of the parable unfolded in the previous article.

The parable is a figure of speech, which presents some divine or supernatural truth under the form of a human or natural transaction. The transaction is either actual or supposed; if supposed, it is neither arbitrary nor impossible, but both possible and probable. Such a union of

the supernatural and the natural, of the divine and the human in language, implies a fitness or capacity in the lower order of life to be the medium through which the higher order, under one or more aspects, may reveal itself truly to the faith of the Christian. This fitness we call resemblance; *resemblance*, not identity. The natural is not the supernatural; the supernatural is not the natural. They are generically and infinitely different. But the one is *analogous* to the other: the natural is like the supernatural in such sense that the seen and known world may be taken as the living image of the unseen and unknown world.

The resemblance is real; not imaginary. It does not lie simply in the mind of the author of the parable. Nor is it arbitrary; it is not put upon these two orders of life at will, or contrary to their own nature in order to suit and serve some given transient purpose. But the resemblance of the natural to the supernatural, of the lower to the higher order of existence, is objective; it lies in the relation itself which these orders of existence sustain to each other. And because real and objective, it is fixed; it does not vary, but remains the same during successive periods of time; and is patent to the eye of faith now as it was when our Lord uttered His parables.

The analogy, for example, of the grain of mustard seed to the kingdom of heaven is in the relation of the one to the other; it was not something only conceived in the mind of our Lord and then forced upon the mustard seed in violation of that relation; but because the analogy was a reality and before the penetrating mind of Christ, He laid hold of it and used it to set forth a sublime spiritual truth. As, however, the analogy is objective and therefore permanent, it is before the mind of the believer now as truly as it was before the mind of Christ; and under the instruction of Christ that analogy may be seen and apprehended by the Church in every age of the world as certainly as it was seen and apprehended by the disciples who heard the parable of the mustard seed from the Saviour's lips. Thus in the parable, social life and the natural world are elevated

to the position of a living visible teacher, that attends the believer from day to day and speaks to him of the things of the Spirit.

But how is the parable to be understood? What is the spiritual truth which, in any given case, it contains? And how is that truth to be ascertained and certified? These are necessary and important inquiries. For evidently the meaning of the parable is not the direct meaning of the language. The true meaning is different from the literal meaning; but though different, it is not uncertain or doubtful. There cannot be different and contradictory meanings, conveyed with equal propriety, and authenticating themselves with equal force. There must be one meaning, and but one, which is true to the exclusion of all others that contradict it; and this one must be accessible to the believing reason; it must be capable of authenticating itself as true to the exclusion of all other possible legitimate constructions. Hence arises the necessity of *interpretation*. And to ascertain and establish this true meaning is the *office* of interpretation.

The interpretation of the parable is regulated by the idea of its nature. If that idea be false or defective, the interpretation will be false or defective. If that idea be true, the interpretation will be true, provided the principles of interpretation be logically deduced from it, and these principles be applied consistently. With the application of a just method of interpretation, however, we are not now concerned, our design being merely to determine the *general principles* of a sound interpretation.

The true idea of the parable, which we have endeavored to state briefly, includes *three* main particulars. As it is important to keep these steadily before the eye in pursuing the present inquiry, we will state them separately.

1. The external *form* of the parable is a statement or narrative of some natural fact or natural event, supposed it may be, but not impossible nor improbable. Every sentence and word is to be taken literally in its bearing upon the natural fact or event; for the language is chosen to set

some such fact distinctly before the mind; and the mind must have a clear and definite conception of this fact, in order that, through it as a medium, the spiritual truth may be apprehended. All circumstances also as parts of the form, whether evidently essential or apparently incidental and trivial, are to be taken into account. No circumstance can justly be disregarded; for each one is really a part of the narrative, and therefore essential to its integrity. If any one be ignored, we get, not a true and complete, but a one-sided and imperfect view of the external *form* of the parable.

2. The *matter* of the parable, or its internal import, is a spiritual or supernatural truth. It is not the direct meaning of the language employed. It is not a proper conception of the fact or event which the language relates. Such conception belongs to the external form. Much less is it a proper conception of any one or more parts of the narrative, whether fundamental or merely circumstantial. The true meaning of the parable is one which a mere circumstance or the whole narrative as such, does neither express nor contain. The true meaning of the narrative as a narrative is one thing, and the true meaning of the parable of which the narrative is the external form, is another and a different thing. There is indeed a most intimate connection between the two things; yet in order to avoid confusion and error they must be accurately distinguished. The sense of the parable, or that which the parable is designed to teach, is the spiritual truth exhibited in the natural fact in virtue of a real analogy between them.

3. There is a *union*, in the parable, of form and matter, of the natural fact or event and the supernatural truth. The natural fact is not the parable; and the supernatural truth is not the parable; but the two taken together, the supernatural in the natural, constitute the parable. These constitutive parts may therefore not be torn asunder. The natural fact can not be considered without any reference to the supernatural truth, nor the supernatural truth without any reference to the natural fact. To do either is

to contradict the idea of the parable; just as the abstract study of the human body irrespective of the human soul, or of the human soul irrespective of the human body, must be fatal to a true idea of man. A true idea of the human soul, of its laws and manner of activity, can be acquired only when we reflect upon it as manifesting itself in its mysterious connection with the body. So too with the parable. The supernatural truth, as given in the parable, can be understood only in connection with the natural fact. A given truth may indeed be taught elsewhere in the Holy Scriptures, perhaps more clearly and fully; but the particular aspect of that truth as taught in a parable is peculiar to that parable, and can be seen and understood only through the medium of the natural fact in union with which the parable holds the supernatural truth. Form and matter are indeed not identical, but different; just as certainly, however, are form and matter not separable, but reciprocally essential, the one to the other, as constitutive parts of one sacred figure of speech.

These are the three fundamental particulars involved in the true idea of the parable, which determine its legitimate interpretation. They determine the *nature* of interpretation, and the *principles* upon which it must be conducted.

The nature of interpretation consists, according to this analysis, in ascertaining the matter of a parable—the supernatural or spiritual truth which it embodies—through the medium of the external form, that is, through reflection upon the whole natural fact in its connection with the context; and in exhibiting this truth under the peculiar aspect in which the natural fact presents it. There is room here for error. The parable may be taken literally, and its spiritual meaning denied or ignored. Or a spiritual meaning may be acknowledged to be in it, but instead of being drawn legitimately from the parable itself, it may be put into it by the imagination of the interpreter. Or a sincere endeavor may be made to draw the meaning from the parable; but the manner in which this is attempted may be in violation of its nature and design. In either

case the true meaning remains concealed, or is perverted. Hence the necessity not only of interpretation, but of conducting interpretation, not according to arbitrary rules, but upon such fixed principles as are fairly deducible from the parable itself.

The first and most general requisite of all, is *a true faith in Jesus Christ*, as God manifest in the flesh, the antitype and fulfilment of Old Testament types, ceremonies and prophecies, and the substance of the entire New Testament revelation. Christ is the central reality of the first and of the second dispensation—of the first as the end towards which the entire system looked; of the second actually and substantially. As such He gives relative position, character and force to every doctrine of the Gospel, every ordinance of the Church, and to the peculiar methods by which the Gospel is taught and propagated. Thus the whole system of Christian truth, and in consequence also the ordinances in which it is exhibited, and the language in which it is taught, derive their significance from Him—from His person and work—as their fundamental principle. To know the Gospel either in its parts or as a whole, it is necessary, therefore, first of all, to know Christ; and to know Him it is necessary to receive Him from the heart in true faith, and obey Him in childlike simplicity. In virtue of such living faith, a man occupies a position which, more than any thing else, qualifies him to apprehend any part of Christian truth, in its true light, and form a correct judgment in relation to it. Then also is he prepared, if he possess other requisite though minor qualifications, to interpret the *language* in which the Gospel is taught. In the absence of true faith in Christ, however, he is not prepared to interpret the language of the Scriptures; no matter how acute and well-balanced his judgment, or how logical his discipline of mind, or how accurate and extensive his attainments in history and philology. For these resources, indispensable and important as they may be, are available only on one condition, namely, that the interpreter is qualified to know and appreciate the truth which the

Scriptures teach—a qualification that can exist in no man who, for want of living faith in Christ, does not really know Christ, nor see the relation of the different parts of the Christian system to Him as their principle. For, most certainly, if an interpreter does not know that which is emphatically *the truth of the Scriptures*,* if he does not live in the element of that truth, and if he is thus disqualified by his moral and spiritual position to understand the truth, it is simply impossible to interpret the language in which the truth is taught. Hence we maintain that Christ is both the principle of supernatural revelation or of all revealed truth, and the principle also of sound biblical interpretation—a principle, the necessity of possessing which, all other qualifications combined can not supersede.

Nor is this position singular. It is not claimed as applicable only to the Sacred Scriptures. It is equally valid in its bearing upon any work on science or art. A mathematician may interpret the language of Euclid, not an honest and intelligent farmer who has never studied any thing beyond the elements of Arithmetic. Chief Justice Story may write a trustworthy commentary on the Federal Constitution, but not a physician who knows little or nothing either of jurisprudence or of the formation of the organic law of the Union. A learned Professor of Medicine may understand Cuvier's Comparative Anatomy, but not an Attorney who does not even know the scientific name of a single bone in the human frame. Johnston may give us some excellent criticisms on Shakespeare, but not a mechanic who has never paid any attention to the cultivation of an aesthetic taste. So too in regard to any classical production. The principle is applicable to every scientific and literary work. A man must be prepared to understand the subject of which a book treats, to whatever department of knowledge it may belong, and be in cordial sympathy with the true principles which underlie the discussion, in order to give a just exposition of it. Otherwise the general

* "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." John 14: 6.

judgment of the scientific world will pronounce his opinions unworthy of confidence.

In maintaining, then, that a true faith in Christ is a primary and essential requisite to the interpretation of the Scriptures, in virtue of which alone natural endowments and the rich resources of scholarship can be made available, we are asserting a principle, which, by common consent, is acknowledged to be valid in its application to any literary production whatever. An American *mathematician* may interpret a French work on mathematics. None other. So may an American *Christian* interpret the Greek or Hebrew sacred Scriptures. None other. And there is no part of the Scriptures, in the interpretation of which this general principle must be more rigidly applied than the Parable; and for two reasons. First, because the literal meaning is not the true meaning; the true meaning can not be apprehended in virtue of the language only; and, secondly, because the true meaning in most cases pertains to the mysteries of the kingdom of God—a part of revealed truth which as much as, if not more than, any other, requires deep sympathy with the things of the Spirit, in order to be known and appreciated. "My doctrine is not mine," says our Lord, "but His that sent me. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7: 16, 17.) By logical consequence the reverse is true also. If a man will not do His will, he shall not, or can not know the doctrine. He can not know any truth pertaining to God or man as revealed by Christ, because the things of the Spirit of God are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. 2: 14.)

That an interpreter possesses this general personal qualification must, therefore, be presupposed in the discussion of the principles on which the interpretation of the parable is to be conducted. Otherwise, for want of the capacity of spiritual discernment, the import of the parable can not be apprehended; and if not, there is no propriety in speaking even of the possibility of a trustworthy exposition. Par-

ticular principles may be understood, but they can not be applied to purpose. The validity of their application depends, in every case, upon their real and constant subordination to the fundamental principle of all biblical interpretation.

These particular principles of interpretation we proceed now to unfold.

Assuming that an interpreter possesses this most general and essential qualification, the first step is to determine the *specific ultimate design* of the parable. Every parable was uttered at a particular time and place; was occasioned by some event or some prevailing false view in religion and morals; and was intended to effect some present practical purpose. The truth which it embodies comes to view thus, not as a general or abstract truth, but in a certain actual connection. It was spoken with direct reference to a case in hand. From the study of this actual connection, or of its direct application, we may learn what the main design of a parable is; in other words, we may learn what that particular aspect of a general truth is which it teaches. This main design, or particular aspect, becomes what may be called the *central truth* around which the sense of the whole parable revolves. It is the prominent part of the parabolic truth to which all other parts are subordinate; and bears a relation to those subordinate parts like that which a genus sustains to its species, or a general conception to the particulars which it includes. It may be compared to the pivot which holds in equilibrium all the forces of the balance-wheel of a watch. Poised on a point, the motion is regular and continuous. What the pivot is to the motion of the wheel, the main-design of a parable is to those purposes which are merely accessory; or the central truth is to those truths which are relatively inferior and subordinate. The central truth, not of the Christian religion nor of any portion of the Word of God, but of the given parable itself must be regarded, accordingly, as the only light in whose reflection a correct conception of all subordinate truths can be formed. Of this central truth

the interpreter must lay hold in order to unfold the true and entire spiritual meaning.

The interpreter may discover what this central truth is, in various ways. He may discover it by considering the immediate context; the general train of historical events in which it occurs; the special occasion on which it was spoken; the introduction to the parable; and its conclusion or application; but mainly by reflection upon the parable itself as a whole in all these relations. In some cases it may be learned from one of these particulars; in others from another; and often from a combination of several or of all. In some cases the main design becomes evident at a glance; in others it is the result of close and patient reflection. But in every case it must be certainly known; for only when known, can each radius and all the points of the circumference be known also. Error here, is error every where. A false view of what is central, is of necessity a false view of what is subordinate and accessory. Lisco says very beautifully and forcibly: "One may compare the entire parable with a circle, of which the middle point is the spiritual truth or doctrine, and of which the radii are the several circumstances of the narration; so long as one has not placed oneself in the centre, neither the circle itself appears in its perfect shape, nor will the beautiful unity with which the radii converge to a single point be perceived; but this is all observed so soon as the eye looks forth from the centre."

The central truth clearly and certainly known, must be held firmly and consistently throughout the whole interpretation. The parable is not a string of beads. It is not an accidental series of events. But it is a beautiful unity. Each part has its necessary place; bears a certain relation to other parts; and has a determinate connection with the whole. Having a fixed position and a bearing upon the main design, each part must be understood accordingly. There is no room for the play of an arbitrary imagination. Holding the central truth firmly, and looking at the organism of the parable as it is in itself, the interpreter ascertains

the meaning of each part in the light of the central truth, determines its relative significance from a correct view of its connection with the unity of the whole, and thus advances step by step until he brings out an entire spiritual meaning of the narrative, all the details of which are consistent with each other and with the main design. If he shift his point of observation, whether consciously or unconsciously, he is led unavoidably into manifest inconsistencies ; he fails to see the inward harmony of all the parts of the parable ; he puts a meaning, the product of his own mind, into the narrative, instead of drawing out of it *the* meaning which it contains ; and in consequence weakens the force, vitiates the merits, and shakes confidence in the propriety of the whole interpretation.

As the parable is the union of the spiritual with the natural, of a spiritual meaning with a natural transaction, the one being the matter, the other the form, we must distinguish not only between the matter and the form as such, but also between that on which a correct view of all the subordinate elements of the spiritual meaning depends, and that on which a correct view of all the subordinate parts of the natural transaction depends. For it must always be fatal to sound interpretation to identify these two distinct things. The one we have called the central truth; the other we may call the fundamental constituent of the natural fact. It is here that we must look for the point of direct resemblance. Resemblance between the spiritual and the natural is not general and perfect. It does not hold true at all points. In most cases it holds true only under one particular aspect. There is one point of contact between the external form and the internal meaning —one point in which the natural fact is *like* the supernatural truth. That point of resemblance in the spiritual meaning is the central truth of the parable; that point of resemblance in the outward form is the leading phase, or the fundamental constituent, of the natural fact. These two things correspond and are complemental to each other. The central truth is that which determines the manner in which all

the elements of the spiritual meaning are to be understood. The fundamental constituent of the natural fact is that which determines the relative bearing of all the attending circumstances. The elements of the spiritual meaning do not correspond or bear a resemblance, each to each respectively, to the attending circumstances of the natural fact; but the relation of attending circumstances to the fundamental constituent of the natural fact, resembles the relation of the subordinate elements of the spiritual meaning to the central truth. The direct resemblance of the form to the matter of a parable, lies between the fundamental constituent of the narrative and the central truth. In virtue of this objective resemblance there is a union of the two things; of the spiritual and the natural in language; the one is in the other; the central truth receiving a legitimate expression under the form of the fundamental constituent, or leading phase of the narrative. Or we may say, the central truth is the fundamental constituent, and the fundamental constituent is the central truth; the one being the internal and spiritual side, and the other the external and natural side of one thing—the turning-point, or the *principle*, of the parable.

Looking at all the attending circumstances in their connection with the fundamental constituent, we get a true and comprehensive conception of the whole narrative. We see the principal and accessory circumstances as the manifold parts of one definite fact. The unity and fulness of the narrative rises in harmonious and beautiful proportions before the eye of the mind. No trifling circumstance is thrust aside as unworthy of consideration; nor is any prominent circumstance exalted beyond its due measure of importance; but each one holds a place in the interpretation which is according to the determining influence of the main point, or principle, from which, as from a germ, the entire organism of the parable has grown forth.

This discussion leads us naturally to the recognition of another particular principle upon which interpretation must be conducted, one too that, like the first, is derived

directly from the nature of the parable. It is *the necessity of a true and full conception of the natural event or fact*. The narrative of the natural fact being the external form of the parable, it is the embodiment and expression of what the parable teaches. It is the form of the spiritual truth ; and the only form of that truth as set forth in any given instance. Being the form of the truth, the manner in which that truth is expressed, it is only through the medium of the form that the interpreter can ascertain what the particular aspect of truth is which the parable contains. And to know the matter by means of the form, the spiritual truth by means of the natural fact, it is self-evident that he must understand precisely what that natural fact is.

The natural fact unites various parts or circumstances all of which must be considered, in order to obtain a conception which shall be true and full. Here arises the vexed question as to the consideration of circumstances. Shall we seek for a spiritual meaning in every circumstance, or not ? If not, how shall we determine which circumstances are to be pressed and which not ? Trench gives a short historical account of the opposite theories which have prevailed on this subject in the ancient and modern Church. Some, like Chrysostom, Theophylact, Origen and Calvin, limit the spiritual meaning to the main features of the parable ; whilst others contend for a particular import in every word and circumstance—such as Augustine, among the Fathers, who frequently “extends the interpretation through all the branches and minutest fibres of the narrative,” and in modern times, the followers of Cocceius who are “particularly earnest in affirming all parts of a parable to be significant.” On a review of the whole controversy, Trench comes to the conclusion that both theories, being one-sided, lean towards error; the advocates of the first mentioned scheme of interpretation being too easily satisfied with their favorite saying : Every comparison must halt somewhere ; whilst those who would press all parts of a parable to the uttermost, have been wont to extort from it almost any meaning that they pleased. But he does

not settle the principle upon which the contradiction is to be removed. Assuming that some circumstances are essential and others non-essential, he says it will help us to determine what is essential and what not, "if, before we attempt to explain the particular parts, we obtain fast hold of the central truth which the parable would set forth, and distinguish it in the mind as sharply and accurately as we can from all cognate truths that border upon it; for only seen from that middle point will the different points appear in their true light."* The principle here laid down by Mr. Trench is undoubtedly true and all-important; yet it does not of itself suffice to meet the difficulties involved in the question. The question, we believe, may be met more satisfactorily from a different point of observation.

The question as to which circumstances have a spiritual meaning and should in consequence be pressed, and which not, proceeds upon an assumption which is not sustained by the nature of the parable. The assumption is that some circumstances are essential, whilst others are non-essential; and that essential circumstances have a spiritual meaning, and must be interpreted; whilst non-essential circumstances, having no special significance, should be passed by. Hence the great point to be settled in each case is: which are and which are not essential?

This assumption we can not regard as valid. Whether a circumstance is to be pressed or not, does not depend upon its relative importance. It depends upon the connection or sense in which it is considered. If regarded as a part of the narrative of the natural fact, or as a part of the external form of the parable, every circumstance, however minute and apparently trivial it may be, is to be considered; for each circumstance being part of a whole narrative, a true conception of the narrative can be formed only when every circumstance is included. Not any one or several prominent points, but all the circumstances taken together, those which are principal and those which

* Notes on the Parables of our Lord, by Richard Chevenix Trench, p. 37.

are subordinate, those which are the turning points in the narrative and those which serve simply to fill out the details; all taken together as given in the parable, and each viewed in its relation both to the fundamental constituent and to all other subordinate parts, constitute the *form* of the parable. And it is the form as a whole, not one part or several parts to the exclusion of others, in which the spiritual meaning of the parable is expressed. To omit any details of the narrative is to mutilate its form; it is to have an incomplete view of the parable as given by our Lord; and an incomplete view of the parable is a bar to the correct understanding of its spiritual meaning; for there is no other medium of access to that meaning but the entire narrative. Hence, considered as parts of the narrative, we can make no distinction between essential and accidental circumstances in order to determine which are, and which are not, to be interpreted; but all must be taken into account and pressed, each in its due measure, that we may get a clear and full conception of the external form of the parable, without which a legitimate interpretation is impossible.

In the parable of the Tares, the servants are directed to let the tares and the wheat grow together until the harvest, and are told that in the time of the harvest the householder will say to his servants, Gather ye together first the tares, and *bind them in bundles* to burn them: a little circumstance to which no part of the interpretation given by our Lord corresponds directly. Yet it is an integral part of the narrative; the true force of which may be distinctly traced in the interpretation: the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall *gather* out of his kingdom all things that offend. (Matth. 13: 41.) Without it the narrative, or the form of the parable, would be wanting in naturalness and completeness. It must, therefore, be duly considered in order to get a true and vivid conception of the whole natural fact in which a sublime truth pertaining to the kingdom of God is imaged forth.

In the parable of the Leaven, the woman hides the leaven

in *three* measures of meal. In that of the Treasure Found, the man who finds the treasure, *hideth* it again, and sells all he has in order to buy the field. In that of the Net, the men *drew* the net, when full, to the shore, then *sat down*, and gathered the good into vessels and cast the bad away. In the parable of the Lost Sheep, the shepherd, when he had found the sheep, laid it on his *shoulders*, rejoicing. In that of the Lost Piece of Money, the woman lights a *candle*, *sweeps* the house and seeks diligently for the lost piece till she finds it. In that of the Good Samaritan, it is said that he bound up the man's wounds, pouring in *oil* and *wine*, and then put the wounded man on his own beast and brought him to an inn; and on the morrow when he departed he took out *two* pence and gave them to the host. In that of the Ten Virgins it is said, that while the bride-groom tarried they *all slumbered and slept*.—In each of these parables, we have one or more circumstances, apparently trivial, but really very significant—significant as parts of the external form of the parable. If significant as parts of the external form, they are also as parts of the parable itself; for matter and form, though they must not be confounded, must neither be violently separated and held asunder. These incidental circumstances are, therefore, to be regarded as necessary to the wholeness of the parable; as much so as the tiny fibres are to the tap-root of the great oak; as the rough bark is to the majestic trunk; as the rind is to the luscious apple; or as the handle is to the blade, or as the margin and interlinear spaces are to the printed page. To exclude the least one from view is to do violence to the symmetry and perfection of the parable as a whole.

Viewed, then, in this light, every circumstance is significant, and is to be pressed according to its relative position and importance. But when viewed with direct reference to the spiritual meaning of the parable, the case is very different. Then just the opposite is true. No circumstance, whatever be its fundamental or relative importance, is to be considered and pressed separately. A single con-

stituent of the narrative, taken by itself or considered without proper reference to other constituents, has no significance at all. It has significance, in one sense, most certainly ; all have without exception, as we have just maintained ; but significance lies in a constituent or circumstance as an integral part of the narrative. Not under any other view of it. It is the *narrative as a whole* which is to be pressed ; and to press the whole is to press each part according to the idea of the whole ; but no part of the narrative is to be pressed at all, if separated from the whole, or considered singly, and then compared directly to some element of the spiritual meaning.

It is contrary, therefore, to the nature of the parable, and a violation of a necessary principle of sound interpretation, to take up all the circumstances one after another, consider each by itself, and thus seek to bring out some definite spiritual meaning corresponding to it ; as though a series of circumstances in the narrative ran parallel to a series of elements in the spiritual meaning, each answering to the other respectively, and independently of the rest, from beginning to end. There is no such mechanical parallelism, a fact that has always been felt by interpreters whenever an attempt has been made to seek for spiritual significance in every circumstance. In the parable of the Widow and Unjust Judge, for example, which teaches the necessity of continual and importunate prayer, the relative position of the Judge corresponds to the relative position of God ; but it is seen at once that certain circumstances can not be pressed ; the Judge was unjust, and feared neither God nor man ; and most certainly it can not be the design of our Lord even to imply that God is unholy and unjust. Christian consciousness repels the thought instinctively. Hence it is thought there must in every instance be a limit to the pressing of circumstances. We must stop somewhere. But where ?

Thus we come back to the same question with which we opened our enquiry into this part of the general subject : How shall we decide which parts of the narrative have a

spiritual meaning, and which not? We must answer in effect as we did before. If the idea of the parable, as we have unfolded it, be correct, it follows that the question itself is not valid. There is an error underlying it. It assumes that, whilst the parallelism, of which we have just spoken, is not complete, it nevertheless exists, and that there must consequently be some circumstances in the narrative, each of which runs parallel to, and is designed to express some corresponding spiritual meaning—some circumstances which are to be interpreted, not in strict subordination to the fundamental constituent, but each in a measure for itself. This method, however, can not, it is held, be pursued as regards every particular; it can not be applied to incidental circumstances; for it is undoubted that a spiritual meaning can not be found for every minute point in the narrative. This is the assumption which underlies the difficult question—an assumption that is contrary to what we believe to be the true idea of the parable; and therefore we must hold it to be unwarranted. And if unwarranted, there is no room for the question. The question can not consistently be put; for since it is the narrative *as a whole*, which embodies the spiritual meaning, it follows that no constituent has a meaning when considered irrespectively of its internal connection with the whole; but on the contrary, when regarded as an integral part of the narrative, and considered in its objective relation to the principle of the parable, every constituent or every little circumstance is significant.

The error underlying the question is accordingly of a two-fold character. On the one hand, it implies that some circumstances of the narrative correspond to some elements of the truth embodied, each to each respectively; and that the import of these circumstances is to be determined by tracing the direct resemblance between the two things, the outward and the inward, the natural and the supernatural. But if the view of the nature of the parable which we have unfolded be correct; and if it be true that there is a turning-point in the parable—a fundamental constituent in the nar-

rative, and a central truth in the meaning, the two things being but different sides of the *principle* of the parable in the light of which all its subordinate parts are to be considered and understood; it must be conceded that the implication is unwarranted. No circumstances are to be subjected to such a method of interpretation. On the other hand, it implies that there may be some circumstances in every parable that have no meaning, and therefore have no bearing upon a sound interpretation. But if the parable be a whole; if all the parts are essential to an accurate and full conception of the narrative; and if the true meaning is to be drawn from the narrative *as a whole*; then this implication is unwarranted also. An interpretation will be incomplete to the extent that the modifying force of any one or more minute circumstances is disregarded. The leaves of a tree are a part of it as really as the trunk and the branches. No conception of a tree can be true that fails to include either attributes. So with the parable. To say of any thing in it: This has no meaning, is an arbitrary decision, and does violence to these gurgling fountains of heavenly wisdom.

It might now be asked, How shall interpretation be conducted on these principles? To answer the question fully would lead us into a longer discussion than we propose. A few general remarks instead must therefore suffice.— Bearing in mind that the parable is a unity developed from a two-fold principle, we must determine first of all what that principle is, namely, what is its external side or the fundamental constituent of the narrative, and what is its internal side or the central truth of the spiritual meaning. For both are essential parts of the principle. We proceed to consider each circumstance in the light of the fundamental constituent or main point, and in turn correct and complete our view of the main point according to the modifying force of *all* the circumstances, those which it is imagined can have no meaning at all having often a most important bearing on the sense of the narrative. The prin-

ciple being two-fold, we lay hold of the central truth in the fundamental constituent, of the internal by means of the external side, and of necessity modify and complete our view of the central truth by whatever modifies and completes our view of the fundamental constituent. Then, looking at all the elements of the spiritual meaning in the light of the central truth, we aim at bringing out the meaning in its true proportions under the determinative influence of the whole narrative. The whole narrative, including every trivial circumstance, sustains a direct relation to the principle, and the principle governs the whole interpretation. Sustaining this relation as a part of the narrative, each circumstance has a bearing upon the unity and completeness of the spiritual meaning. Each one without exception, interpreted not by itself or in its own light, but as a part of the whole, serves in its objective connection with the principle to determine the precise and entire sense of the parable. Thus we get a distinct and comprehensive conception of the parabolic truth—a conception in which no subordinate part of the narrative either loses its modifying influence, or is raised beyond its proper relative position, but in which each possesses a degree of significance which is its due, and at the same time consistent with the controlling force of the central truth as apprehended through the organic unity of the natural fact—a conception in which no primary element of the spiritual import is depressed or too deeply shaded, and no secondary element is unduly elevated or seen in too strong a light, but in which the positive force of each element, or the distribution of light and shade, is normal, or according to the idea of the whole—a conception which is manifold yet one, a beautiful unity, the clear, accurate, full and true apprehension by the believing reason of a divine truth as revealed in a human figure of speech.

By way of illustration we may refer again to the parable of the Unjust Judge. The character of the judge is a circumstance which, some say, does not teach any thing; it can not be intended to set forth any attribute in the char-

acter of God ; and therefore an interpreter, it is thought, has nothing to do with it. This position would be correct on the assumption that the character of the judge must bear a direct resemblance to some corresponding element of the spiritual import. On the principles of interpretation however which we have laid down, the position is not tenable. Considered in its relation to the main point, namely, the pleading of the widow, the ungodly character of the judge is an important circumstance, and can not be disregarded without weakening the force of the parable. The purpose of the widow receives not the least support or encouragement from a judge who feared not God nor regarded man ; the tendency of his character, on the contrary, is to repel her from his presence and repress even the thought of approaching him. She comes nevertheless and pleads. Thus this circumstance serves to set forth in strong relief the fixed purpose of the widow to gain her end by a persevering importunity that would not be conquered or exhausted by repeated and stern refusals. The parable teaches, accordingly, that—assuming the matter prayed for to be according to the divine will—the resolution of true faith to be heard, and earnest perseverance in the repetition of the same prayer, are acceptable and available before Almighty God. Not only are faith, humility, submission and earnestness requisites in prayer ; but an unchangeable purpose and perseverance, that will listen to no denial, also constitute a necessary part of that effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man that availeth much. A remarkable instance of such sublime determination to be heard we have in the wrestling of Jacob. (Gen. 32: 24-26.) Jacob was left alone ; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh ; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

It would be in order now to pass to the consideration of the *third* particular principle of interpretation. But as we

do not wish to exceed the usual limits of an article, we will conclude simply by stating the principle instead of discussing it. It pertains to the *immediate object* of interpretation, or to that upon which, strictly speaking, a legitimate interpretation of the parable must terminate. It is the office of an interpreter to lay out its import—not its *literal*, but its *spiritual meaning*. In the light of the true idea of the parable, this principle may be said to be self evident; yet in view of the frequency with which it is violated by learned interpreters, it is important to state it formally and even to discuss it.

On these particular principles, which follow as postulates from the idea of the parable, a legitimate interpretation is required to proceed. If logically applied from beginning to end, the hidden spiritual import can be developed in all its depth and fulness. If not logically applied, a legitimate interpretation is impossible. The truth of the parable is but partially developed, or it is perverted, or remains concealed altogether as a necessary consequence.

E. V. G.

ART. VI.—THE ASCETIC SYSTEM.

By asceticism * we mean, in general, a rigid outward self-discipline, by which the spirit strives after full dominion over the flesh, and a superior grade of virtue. It includes not only that true temperance and restraining of the animal appetites, which is a universal Christian duty, but total abstinence from enjoyments in themselves lawful, from wine, animal food, property, and marriage, together with all kinds of penances and mortifications of the body. In the union of the abstractive and penitential elements, or of self-denial and self-punishment the catholic asceticism stands forth complete in light and shade; exhibiting, on the one hand, wonderful examples of heroic renunciation of self and the world, but very often, on the other, a total misapprehension and perversion of Christian morality; the renunciation involving more or less a Gnostic contempt of the gifts and ordinances of the God of nature, and the penance or self-punishment running into practical denial of the all-sufficient merits of Christ. The ascetic and monastic tendency rests primarily upon a lively, though for the most part morbid sense of the sinfulness of the flesh and the irremediable corruption of the world; then upon the desire for undisturbed solitude and exclusive occupation with divine things; and finally, upon a certain religious ambition to attain extraordinary holiness and merit. It would anticipate the life of angels † upon the earth. It substitutes an abnormal, self-appointed virtue and piety for the normal forms prescribed by God; and not rarely looks

* *Ἄσκησις*, from *ἀσκέω*, to exercise, to strengthen; primarily applied to athletic and gymnastic exercises, but used also, even by the heathens and by Philo, of moral self-discipline.

† Matt. 22: 30. Hence the frequent designation of monastic life as a *vita angelica*.

down upon the divinely-ordained standard with spiritual pride. It is a mark at once of moral strength and moral weakness. It presumes a certain degree of culture, in which man has emancipated himself from the powers of nature and risen to the consciousness of his moral calling; but thinks to secure itself against temptation only by entire separation from the world, instead of standing in the world to overcome it and transform it into the kingdom of God.

Asceticism is by no means limited to the Christian Church, though it there first developed its highest and noblest form. We observe kindred phenomena even long before Christ; among the Jews, in the Nazarites, the Essenes, and the cognate Therapeutae; and still more among the heathens, in the old Persian and Indian religions, especially among the Buddhists. Even the Grecian Philosophy was conceived by the Pythagoreans, the Platonists, and the Stoics, not as theoretical knowledge merely, but also as practical wisdom, and frequently joined itself to the most rigid abstemiousness, so that "philosopher" and "ascetic" were interchangeable terms. Most of the apologists of the second century had by this practical philosophy, particularly the Platonic, been led to Christianity; and they on this account retained their simple dress and mode of life. Tertullian congratulates the philosopher's cloak on having now become the garb of a better philosophy. In the show of self-denial the Cynics, the followers of Diogenes, went to the extreme; but these, at least in their later degenerate days, concealed under the guise of bodily squalor, untrimmed nails, and uncombed hair, a common Cynic spirit and a bitter hatred of Christianity.

In the ancient Church there was a special class of Christians, of both sexes, who, under the name of "ascetics," or "abstinentes,"* though still living in the midst of the community, retired from society, voluntarily renounced marriage and property, devoted themselves wholly to fast-

**Ἄσκεται, continentes; also ἥρετοι, virgines.*

ings, prayer, and religious contemplation, and strove thereby to attain Christian perfection. Sometimes they formed a society of their own,* for mutual improvement, an ecclesiola in ecclesia, in which even children could be received and trained to abstinence. They shared with the confessors the greatest regard from their fellow Christians, had a separate seat in the public worship, and were considered the fairest ornaments in the Church. In times of persecution they sought with enthusiasm a martyr's death as the crown of perfection. While as yet each congregation was a lonely oasis in the desert of the world's corruption, and stood in downright opposition to the surrounding heathen world, these ascetics had no reason for separating from it and flying into the desert. It was under Constantine, and partly in consequence of the union of Church and State, the consequent transfer of the world into the Church, and the cessation of martyrdom, that asceticism developed itself to anchoritism and monkyry, and endeavored thus to save the virgin purity of the Church by carrying it into the wilderness. Yet the lives of the two first hermits, Paul of Thebes (†340) and Anthony of Egypt (†356), fall, at least partly, in the ante-Nicene age. At the time of Cyprian† there was as yet no absolutely binding vow. The early origin and wide spread of this ascetic life are due to the deep moral earnestness of Christianity and the prevalence of sin in all the social relations of the then still thoroughly pagan world. It was the excessive development of the negative, world-rejecting element in Christianity, which must precede its positive effort to transform and sanctify the world.

The ascetic principle, however, was not confined, in its influence, to the proper ascetics and monks. It ruled more or less the entire morality and piety of the ancient and mediaeval Church; though, on the other hand, there were never wanting in her bosom protests of the free, evangeli-

* Ασκητηριον.

† Epist. 62,

cal spirit against moral narrowness and excessive regard to outward works of the law. The ascetics were but the most consistent representatives of the old catholic piety, and were commended as such by the apologists to the heathens. They formed the spiritual aristocracy, the full bloom of the Church, and served especially as examples to the clergy.

But we must now distinguish two different kinds of asceticism in Christian antiquity: a heretical and an orthodox.

The heretical asceticism, the beginnings of which are resisted in the New Testament itself,* meets us in the Gnostic and Manichaean sects. It is descended from Oriental and Platonic heathenism, and is based on a dualistic view of the world, a confusion of sin with matter, and a perverted idea of God and the creation. It places God and the world at irreconcilable enmity, derives the creation from an inferior being, considers the human body substantially evil, a product of the devil or the demiurge, and makes it the great moral business of man to rid himself of the same, or gradually to annihilate it, whether by excessive abstinence or by unbridled indulgence. Many of the Gnostics placed the fall itself in the first gratification of the sexual desire, which subjected man to the dominion of the Hyle.

The orthodox or catholic asceticism proceeds upon Christian views and upon a literal and overstrained construction of certain passages of Scripture. It admits, that all nature is the work of God and the object of his love, and asserts the divine origin and destiny of the human body, without which there could, in fact, be no resurrection, and hence no admittance to eternal glory. It therefore aims not to mortify the body, but perfectly to control and sanctify it. For the metaphysical dualism between spirit and matter, it substitutes the ethical conflict between the spirit and the flesh. But in practice it exceeds the simple and

* 1 Tim. 4: 8. Col. 2: 16 sqq. Comp. Rom. 14.

sound limits of the Bible, falsely substitutes the bodily appetites and affections or sensuous nature, as such, for the flesh, on the principle of selfishness, which resides in the soul as well as in the body, and thus, with all its horror of heresy, really joins in the Gnostic and Manichaean hatred of the body as the prison of the spirit. This comes out especially in the depreciation of marriage and the family life, this divinely appointed nursery of Church and State, and in excessive self-inflections, to which the apostolic piety affords not the remotest parallel. The heathen Gnostic principle of separation from the world and from the body,* as a means of self-redemption, after being theoretically exterminated, stole into the Church by a back door of practice, directly in face of the Christian doctrine of the high destiny of the body, and perfect redemption through Christ.

The Alexandrian fathers first furnished a theoretical basis for this asceticism in the distinction, suggested even by the Pastor Hermae,† of a lower and a higher morality; a distinction, which, like that introduced at the same period by Tertullian, of mortal and venial sins,‡ gave rise to many practical errors, and favored both moral laxity and ascetic extravagance. The ascetics, and afterwards the monks, formed a moral nobility, a spiritual aristocracy, above the common Christian people; as the clergy stood in a separate caste of inviolable dignity above the laity. Clement of Alexandria, otherwise remarkable for his elevated ethical views, requires of the Christian sage or gnostic, that he excel the plain Christians, not only by higher knowledge, but also by higher, emotionless virtue, and stoical superiority to all bodily conditions; and he inclines to regard the body, with Plato, as the grave and fetters of the soul. How little he understood the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith, may be inferred from a passage in the Stromata, where he explains the word of Christ: "Thy

* Entweilichung and Entleiblichung.

† Simil. V, 8 (p. 492 ed. Dressel): Si autem praeter ea quae mandavit Dominus aliquid boni adjeceris, majorem dignitatem tibi conquires, et honoratio apud Dominum eris, quam eras futurus.

‡ Peccata irremissibilia and remissibilia, or mortalia and venialia.
¶ Ταπει, διπει.

faith has saved thee," as referring not to faith simply without good works, but to the Jews only, who lived according to the law; as if faith was something to be added to the good works instead of being the source and principle of the holy life. Origent[†] goes still further, and propounds quite distinctly the Catholic doctrine of works of supererogation[‡]; works not enjoined indeed in the gospel, yet recommended,^{||} which were supposed to establish a peculiar merit and secure a higher degree of blessedness. He, who does only what is required of all, is an unprofitable servant;[§] but he, who does more, who performs, for example, what Paul, in 1 Cor. 7: 25, merely recommends concerning the single state, or, like him, resigns his just claim to temporal renumeration for spiritual service, is called a good and faithful servant.[¶] Among these works were reckoned martyrdom, voluntary poverty, and voluntary celibacy. All three, or at least the last two of these acts, in connection with the positive Christian virtues, belong to the idea of the higher perfection, as distinguished from the fulfilment of regular duties, or ordinary morality. To poverty and celibacy was afterwards added absolute obedience; and these three things were the main subjects of the *consilia evangelica* and the monastic vow.

The ground, on which these particular virtues were so strongly urged, is easily understood.

Property, which is so closely allied to the selfishness of man and binds him to the earth; and sexual intercourse, which brings out sensual passion in its greatest strength, and which nature herself covers with the veil of modesty;

[†] In ep. ad Rom. C. III, ed. de la Rue IV, p. 507: *Donec quis hoc tantum facit, quod debet, i. e., quae praecepta sunt, inutilis servus. Si autem addas aliquid ad praeceptum, tunc non jam inutilis servus eris, sed dicetur ad te: Euge serve bone et fidelis.* Quid autem sit quod addatur praeceptis et supra debitum fiat, Paulus ap. dicit: *De virginibus autem praeceptum Domini non habeo, consilium autem do, tanquam misericordiam assecutus a Domino (1 Cor. 7: 26).* Hoc opus *super praeceptum* est. Et iterum *praeceptum* est, ut hi qui evangelium nunciant, de evangelio vivant. Paulus autem dicit, quis nullo horum usus sum: et ideo non inutilis erit servus, sed fidelis et prudens.

[‡] *Opera supererogatoria.*

^{||} Matth. 19: 21. Luke 24: 26. 1 Cor. 7: 8 sq. 25. Hence *consilia evangelica*, in distinction from *praecepta*.

[§] Luke 17: 10.

[¶] Matth. 25: 21.

—these present themselves as the firmest obstacles to that perfection, in which God alone is our possession, and Christ alone our love and delight.

In these things the ancient heretics went to the extreme. The Ebionites made poverty the condition of salvation; the Gnostics either entirely prohibited marriage and procreation as a diabolical work, as in the case of Saturninus, Marcion, and the Encratites; or substituted for it the most shameless promiscuous intercourse, as in Carpocrates, Epiphanes, and the Nicolaitans.

The ancient Church, on the contrary, held to the divine institution of property and marriage, and was content to recommend the voluntary renunciation of these intrinsically lawful pleasures to the few elect, as means of attaining Christian perfection. She declares marriage holy, virginity more holy. But unquestionably even the church fathers so exalted the higher holiness of virginity, as practically to neutralize, or at least, seriously weaken, their assertion of the holiness of marriage. The Roman Church, in spite of the many Bible examples of married men of God from Abraham to Peter, can conceive no real holiness without celibacy, and therefore requires celibacy of its clergy without exception.

The recommendation of *voluntary poverty* was based on a literal interpretation of the Lord's advice to the rich young ruler, who had kept all the commandments from his youth up. "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me."* To this were added the actual examples of the poverty of Christ and his apostles, and the community of goods in the first Christian Church at Jerusalem. Many Christians, not of the ascetics only, but also of the clergy, like Cyprian, accordingly gave up all their property at their conversion for the benefit of the poor. The later monastic societies sought to represent in their community of goods the original equality and the per-

* Math. 19 : 21.

fect brotherhood of men. Yet on the other hand, Clement of Alexandria for example, in a special treatise on the right use of wealth,† observes, that the Saviour forbade not so much the possession of earthly property, as the love of it and desire for it; and that it is possible to retain the latter, even though the possession itself be renounced. The earthly, says he, is a material and a means for doing good, and the unequal distribution of property is a divine provision for the exercise of Christian love and beneficence. The true riches are the virtue, which can and should maintain itself under all outward conditions; the false are the mere outward possession, which comes and goes.

The old Catholic exaggeration of *celibacy* attached itself to four passages of Scripture, viz: Matth. 19: 12; 22; 30; 1 Cor. 7: 7, sqq.; and Rev. 14: 4; but it went far beyond them, and unconsciously admitted influences from foreign modes of thought. The words of the Lord in Matth. 22: 30, Luke 20: 35 sq., which, however, expressly limit unmarried life to the angels, without setting it up as the model for men,—were most frequently cited. Rev. 14: 4 was taken by some of the fathers more correctly in the symbolical sense of freedom from the pollution of idolatry. The example of Christ, though often urged, cannot here furnish a rule, for the Son of God and Saviour of the world, was too far above all the daughters of Eve, to find an equal companion among them, and in any case cannot be conceived as holding such relation. The whole Church of the redeemed is his pure bride. Of the apostles some at least were married, and among them Peter, the oldest and most prominent of all. The advice of Paul in 1 Cor. 7, is so cautiously given and guarded that even here the view of the fathers found but partial support; especially if balanced with the Pastoral Epistles, where monogamy is presented as the proper condition for the clergy. Nevertheless he was frequently made the apologist of celibacy by orthodox and heretical writers. Judaism—with the exception of the paganizing

† Τι ε σοβαρες τλωνες

Essenes, who abstained from marriage—highly honors the family life; it allows marriage even to the priests and the high-priests, who had in fact to maintain their order by physical reproduction, and it considers unfruitfulness a shame or a curse. Heathenism, on the contrary, just because of its own degradation of woman, and its low, sensual conception of marriage, frequently includes celibacy in its ideal of morality, and associates it with worship. The noblest form of heathen virginity appears in the six Vestal virgins of Rome, who, while girls of from six to ten years, were selected for the service of the pure goddess, and set to keep the holy fire burning on her altar, but, after serving thirty years, were allowed to return to secular life and marry. The penalty for breaking their vow of chastity was, to be buried alive in the *campus sceleratus*.

The ascetic depreciation of marriage is thus due, at least in part, to the influence of heathenism. But with this was associated the Christian enthusiasm for angelic purity, in opposition to the horrible licentiousness of the Graeco-Roman world. It was long before Christianity raised woman and the family life to the purity and dignity, which became them in the kingdom of God. In this view we may the more easily account for many expressions of the church fathers respecting the female sex, and warnings against intercourse with women, which to us, in the present state of European and American civilization, sound perfectly coarse and unchristian. John of Damascus has collected in his *Parallels* such patristic expressions as these: “A woman is an evil.” “A rich woman is a double evil.” “A beautiful woman is a whitened sepulchre.” “Better is a man’s wickedness, than a woman’s goodness.” The men, who could write so, must have forgotten the beautiful passages to the contrary in the proverbs of Solomon and Sirach; they must have forgotten their own mothers.

The excessive regard for celibacy and the accompanying depreciation of marriage, date from about the middle of the second century, and reach their height in the Nicene age.

Ignatius, in his Epistle to Polycarp, expresses himself as

yet very moderately: "If any one can remain in chastity of the flesh to the glory of the Lord of the flesh (or, according to another reading, of the flesh of the Lord), let him remain thus without boasting; if he boast, he is lost, and if it be made known, beyond the bishop,* he is ruined." What a stride from this to the obligatory celibacy of the clergy! Yet the admonition leads us to suppose, that celibacy was thus early, in the beginning of the second century, in many cases boasted of as meritorious, and allowed to nourish spiritual pride. Ignatius is the first to call voluntary virgins brides of Christ and jewels of Christ.

Justin Martyr goes further. He points to many Christians of both sexes, who lived to a great age unpolluted; and he desires celibacy to prevail to the greatest possible extent. He refers to the example of Christ, and expresses the singular opinion, that the Lord was born of a virgin only to put a limit to the sexual desire, and to show, that God could produce without the sensual agency of man. His disciple Tatian ran even to the Gnostic extreme upon this point, and in a lost work on Christian perfection, condemned conjugal co-habitation as a fellowship of corruption destructive of prayer. At the same period, Athenagoras wrote, in his *Apology*: "Many may be found among us, of both sexes, who grow old unmarried, full of hope, that they are in this way more closely united to God."

Clement of Alexandria is the most reasonable of all the fathers in his views on this point. He considers eunuchism a special gift of divine grace, but without yielding it on this account unqualified preference above the married state. On the contrary, he vindicates with great decision the moral dignity and sanctity of marriage against the heretical extravagances of his time, and lays down the general principle, that Christianity stands not in outward observances, enjoyments, and privations, but in righteousness

* Εάν γυναικες τινες τοις επισκόποις, according to the larger Greek recension, c. 5. With which the Syriac (c. 2) and Armenian versions agree. But the shorter Greek recension reads επίσκοπον for επισκόπη, which would give the sense: "If he think himself (on that account) above the (married) bishop; si majorem se episcopo censeat."

and peace of heart. Of the Gnostics he says, that, under the fair name of abstinence, they act impiously towards the creation and the holy Creator, and repudiate marriage and procreation on the ground, that a man should not introduce others into the world to their misery, and provide new nourishment for death. He justly charges them with inconsistency, in despising the ordinances of God, and yet enjoying the nourishment created by the same hand, breathing his air, and abiding in his world. He rejects the appeal to the example of Christ; because Christ needed no help, and because the Church is his bride. The apostles also he cites against the impugners of marriage. Peter and Philip begat children; Philip gave his daughters in marriage; and even Paul hesitated not to speak of a female companion (rather only of his right to lead about such an one, as well as Peter). We seem translated into an entirely different, Protestant atmosphere, when in this genial writer we read: The perfect Christian, who has the Apostles for his patterns, proves himself truly a man in this, that he chooses not a solitary life, but marries, begets children, cares for the household, yet under all the temptations, which his care for wife and children, domestics and property presents, swerves not from his love to God, and as a Christian householder exhibits a minature of the all-ruling Providence.

But how little such views agreed with the spirit of that age, we see in Clement's own Stoical and Platonizing conception of the physical appetites, and still more in his great disciple Origen, who voluntarily disabled himself in his youth, and could not think of the act of generation as any thing but polluting. Hieracas, who also perhaps belonged to the Alexandrian school, is said to have carried his asceticism to a heretical extreme, and to have declared virginity a condition of salvation. Methodius was an opponent of the spiritualistic, but not of the ascetic Origen, and wrote an enthusiastic plea for virginity, founded on the idea of the Church as the pure, unspotted, ever young, and ever beautiful bride of God. Yet, quite remarkably, in his

‘Feast of the Ten Virgins,’ the virgins express themselves respecting the sexual relations with a minuteness, which to our modern taste is extremely indelicate and offensive.

As to the Latin fathers, Tertullian, although himself married, placed celibacy above marriage as a higher degree of sanctity, represents marriage more as a concession which God made to the weakness of our flesh, and, in his Montanistic period, most vehemently combatted second marriage as a decent form of adultery and fornication. His disciple, Cyprian, differs from him in his ascetic principles only by greater moderation in expression, and, in his treatise *De habitu virginum*, commends the unmarried life on the ground of Matth. 19: 12; 1 Cor. 7., and Rev. 14: 4.

Celibacy was most common with pious virgins, who married themselves only to God or to Christ,* and in the spiritual delights of this heavenly union found abundant compensation for the pleasures of earthly matrimony. But cases were not rare, where sensuality thus violently suppressed, asserted itself under other forms; as, for example, in indolence and ease at the expense of the Church, which Tertullian finds it necessary to censure; or in the vanity and love of dress, which Cyprian rebukes; and, worst of all in a venture of asceticism, which probably often enough resulted in failure, or at least filled the imagination with impure thoughts. Many of these heavenly brides† lived with male ascetics, and especially with unmarried clergymen, under pretext of a purely spiritual fellowship, in so intimate intercourse, as to put their continence to the most perilous test, and wantonly challenge temptation from which we should rather pray to be kept. This unnatural and shameless practice was probably introduced by the Gnostics; Irenaeus at least charges it upon them. The first trace of it in the Church appears, though under rather innocent allegorical form, in the *Pastor Hermae*, which originated from the Roman Church.‡ It is next mentioned

* Nuptiae Deo, Christo.

† Αδελφαι, sorores (1 Cor. 9: 5); afterwards cleverly called γυναις; εργασται, mulieres subintroductae, extraneae.

‡ Simil. IX. c. II (in Dresel, p. 627.)

in the Pseudo-Clementine Epistles ad Virgines. In the third century it prevailed widely in the east and west. The worldly-minded bishop Paulus, of Antioch, favored it by his own example. Cyprian of Carthage came out earnestly, and with all reason, against the vicious practice, in spite of the solemn protestation of innocence by these sorores, and their appeal to investigations through midwives. Several councils, at Elvira, Aneyra, Nice, &c., felt called upon to forbid this pseudo-ascetic scandal. Yet the intercourse of clergy with "mulieres subintroductae" rather increased than diminished with the increasing stringency of the celibate laws, and has at all times more or less disgraced the Romish priesthood.

It is not our intention here to follow the further development of the ascetic system through the Nicene and the Middle ages; for this would imply a whole history of anchoritism, monasticism, and the celibacy of the clergy in the Greek and Roman Church. We merely intended to trace its origin and to exhibit it in its primitive form under its good and bad aspects.

With all its morbid excesses and corruptions, the ascetic system must be admitted by the impartial historian to have fulfilled a great and important mission in the past. It asserted the uncompromising antagonism of Christian morality against the awful corruption of the old heathen world as centring in its absorbing worldliness and sensuality; it developed the negative aspect of this morality, its intense capacity of self-denial and abstinence; and it was used by Providence as one of the most efficient means to prepare the barbarian nations of the middle ages for Christianity and civilization.

This mission accomplished, the Church had to enter upon the higher duty of transforming and sanctifying all the divinely appointed relations and conditions of man, by the positive principle of Christian ethics and to penetrate the whole lump of society by its leaven-like power. This is the Protestant evangelical system of morality which we are bound to hold fast and to carry out untempted by the

allurements of the artificial show of ascetic hypo-holiness. It agrees with the inmost spirit of the New Testament, which every where goes hand in hand and in the vane of the westward and onward march of the Protestant religion. It agrees likewise with an enlightened moral philosophy, which is most extensively cultivated in the bosom of Protestantism. Christianity, we should never forget, starts with the regeneration of the soul and ends with the resurrection of the body; it is in its inmost nature, not law and work, but gospel and faith, not letter and slavery, but spirit and freedom, not irrational and unnatural, but superrational and supernatural. The God of grace is also the God of nature; the Head of the Church is also the Ruler of the world; Christ is not a hermit and a saint of the desert, but the absolute ideal of human perfection, the eternal priest and king of the regenerate race, and the living centre of the moral universe.

P. S.

Mercersburg, Pa., Sept., 1858.

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ART. VII.—THE INFLUENCE OF THE EARLY CHURCH ON THE INSTITUTION OF SLAVERY.

HEATHENISM, even under its most enlightened form, has no idea whatever of the general and natural rights of men. The ancient republics of Greece and Rome consisted in the exclusive dominion of a minority over a hopelessly oppressed majority. Both the Greeks and Romans regarded only the free, i. e., the free-born rich and independent citizens as men in the full sense of the term, and denied this privilege to the foreigners, the laborers, the poor, and the slaves. They claimed the natural right to make war upon all foreign nations, without distinction of race, in order to subject them to their iron rule. Even with Cicero the foreigner and the enemy are synonymous terms. The barbarians were taken in thousands by the chance of war (above 100,000 in the Jewish war alone) and sold as cheap as horses. Besides, an active slave-trade was carried on, particularly in the Euxine, the eastern provinces, the coast of Africa, and Britain. It may be safely asserted that the greater part of mankind in the old Roman empire was reduced to a hopeless state of slavery, and to a half brutish level.

Attica numbered, according to Ctesicles, under the governorship of Demetrius the Phalerian (309 b. c.) 400,000 slaves, 10,000 foreigners, and only 21,000 free citizens. In Sparta the disproportion was still greater. As to the Roman empire, Gibbon estimates the number of slaves, under the reign of Claudius, at no less than one half of the entire population, i. e., about sixty millions.* But according to Robertson there were twice as many slaves as free citizens, and Blair† estimates over three slaves to one Freeman, between the conquest of Greece (146 b. c.) and the reign of Alexander Severus (A. D. 222–235). The proportion was of course very different in the cities and in the rural districts.

* I. 52 ed. Milman, N. Y., 1860.

† In his work on Roman slavery, Edinb., 1833. p. 15.

Athaenaeus, as quoted by Gibbon, (p. 51) boldly asserts that he knew very many (*παρτολλοις*) Romans who possessed, not for use, but ostentation, ten and even twenty thousand slaves. In a single palace at Rome four hundred slaves were maintained, and were all executed for not preventing their master's murder.‡ The legal condition of the slaves is thus described by Taylor on *Civil Law* :|| "Slaves were held *pro nullis*, *pro mortuis*, *pro quadrupedibus*; nay, were in a much worse state than any cattle whatsoever. They had no head in the state, no name, no title, or register; they were not capable of being injured; nor could they take by purchase or descent; they had no heirs, and therefore could make no will; they were not entitled to the rights and considerations of matrimony; and therefore had no relief in case of adultery; nor were they proper objects of cognation or affinity, but of quasi-cognition only; they could be sold, transferred, or pawned, as goods or personal estate, for goods they were, and as such they were esteemed; they might be tortured for evidence, punished at the discretion of their lord, and even put to death by his authority; together with many other civil incapacities which I have no room to enumerate." Gibbon (p. 48) thinks that "against such internal enemies, whose desperate insurrections had more than once reduced the republic to the brink of destruction, the most severe regulations and the most cruel treatment seemed almost justifiable by the great law of self-preservation." It is but just to remark, that the philosophers of the first and second century, Seneca, Pliny, and Plutarch, entertain much milder views on this subject than the older writers, and commend a humane treatment of the slaves; also that the Antonines improved their condition to some extent, and took the oft abused jurisdiction of life and death over the slaves out of private hands into those of the magistrates. But at that time Christian principles and sentiments already freely circulated throughout the empire, and exerted a silent influence even over the educated heathens. This unconscious atmospheric influ-

‡ Tacit. *Annal.* XIV. 48.

|| As quoted in Cooper's *Justinian*, p. 411.

ence, so to speak, is continually exerted by Christianity over the surrounding world, which without this would be far worse than it actually is.

This evil of slavery was so thoroughly interwoven with the entire domestic and public life of the heathen world, and so deliberately regarded, even by the greatest philosophers, Aristotle, for instance, as natural and indispensable, that the abolition of it seemed to belong among the impossible things.

Yet from the outset Christianity has labored for this end; not by impairing the right of property, not by outward violence, nor sudden revolution; this, under the circumstances, would only have made the evil worse; but by its moral power, by preaching the divine character and original unity of all men, their common redemption through Christ, the duty of brotherly love, and the true freedom of the spirit. It placed slaves and masters on the same footing of dependence on God and of freedom in God, the Father, Redeemer, and Judge of both. It conferred inward freedom even under outward bondage, and taught obedience to God and for the sake of God, even in the enjoyment of outward freedom. This moral and religious freedom must lead at last to the personal and civil liberty of the individual; since Christianity redeems not only the soul but the body also, and the process of regeneration ends in the resurrection and glorification of the entire natural world.

In the early Church, however, the abolition of slavery, save in isolated cases of manumission, was utterly out of question, considering only the enormous number of the slaves. The question was not agitated at all, and hardly referred to by the fathers. From this an abolitionist of the modern stamp would at once be disposed to infer that the early Church silently acquiesced in and sanctioned an institution which he honestly abhors as a fruitful source of innumerable evils. But such a conclusion and charge would be manifestly unfair and unjust. It must be remembered that it takes time to cure any evil of society, and that a gradual and silent cure is always the most safe and radical in the end. The world, at that time, was far from

ripe for such a step, as a general emancipation. The Church, in her persecuted condition, had as yet no influence at all over the machinery of the State and the civil legislation. And she was at that time so absorbed in the transcendent importance of the higher world and in her longing for the speedy return of the Lord, that she cared very little for any earthly freedom or temporal happiness. Hence Ignatius, in his epistle to Polycarp, counsels servants to serve only the more zealously to the glory of the Lord, that they may receive from God the higher freedom; and not to attempt to be redeemed at the expense of their Christian brethren, lest they be found slaves to their own caprice. From this we see that slaves, in whom faith awoke the sense of manly dignity and the desire of freedom, were accustomed to demand their redemption at the expense of the Church, as a right, and were thus liable to value the earthly freedom more than the spiritual. Hence the apostolic father's admonition, which seems to be rather inconsistent with the advice of St. Paul : " If thou mayest be free, use it rather ; for he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman."* Tertullian declares the outward freedom worthless without the inward, without the ransom of the soul from the bondage of sin. " How can the world," says he, " make a servant free ? All is mere show in the world, nothing truth. For the slave is already free, as a purchase of Christ ; and the freedman is a servant of Christ. If thou takes the freedom which the world can give for true, thou hast thereby become again the servant of man, and hast lost the freedom of Christ, in that thou thinkest it bondage." Chrysostom, in the fourth century, was the first of the fathers to discuss the question of slavery at large in the spirit of the apostle Paul, and to recommend, though cautiously, a gradual emancipation.

But the church before Constantine labored already with great success to improve the intellectual and moral condition of the slaves, to adjust inwardly the inequality be-

* 1 Cor. vii. 21, 22.

tween slaves and masters, as the first and efficient step towards the final outward abolition of the evil, and to influence the public opinion even of the heathens, as may be seen in the milder view of a Seneca, Pliny, Plutarch, and the latter legislation concerning the treatment of this unfortunate class of men.

It is here to be considered, first of all, that Christianity spread freely among the slaves, except where they were so extremely rude as to be insensible to all higher impressions; and that they were not rarely the instruments of the conversion of their masters, especially of the women and children, whose training was frequently intrusted to them. Not a few slaves died martyrs, and were enrolled among the saints; Onesimus, for example, Eutychus, Victorinus, Maro, Nereus, Achilleus, Potamiaena, and others. An ancient tradition makes Onesimus, the slave of Philemon, bishop of Beroea, in Macedonia.* According to the account of the author of the "Philosophoumena" even a Roman bishop, Calixtus I., in the early part of the third century, was originally a slave. Celsus cast it up as a reproach to Christianity, that it let itself down so readily to slaves, fools, women, and children. But Origen justly saw an excellence of the new religion in this very fact, that it could raise this despised and, in the prevailing view, irclaimable class of men to the level of moral purity and worth. If, then, converted slaves, with the full sense of their intellectual and religious superiority, still remained obedient to their heathen masters, and even served them more faithfully than before, resisting decidedly only their immoral demands (like Potamiaena, and other chaste women and virgins in the service of voluptuous masters),—they showed, in this very self-control, the best proof of their ripeness for civil freedom, and at the same time furnished the fairest memorial of that Christian faith, which raised the soul, in the enjoyment of sonship, with God and in the hope of the blessedness of heaven, above the suffer-

* According to the Apost. Constitutions VII. 46, St. Paul himself ordained and installed him as bishop over that congregation. But the Roman Martyrologium makes him successor of Timothy at Ephesus.

ings and the conflicts of earth. Euelpistes, a slave of the imperial household, who was carried with Justin Martyr to the tribunal of Rusticus, on being questioned concerning his condition, replied: "I am a slave of the emperor, but I am also a Christian, and have received liberty from Jesus Christ; by his grace I have the same hope as my brethren." Where the owners of the slaves themselves became Christians, the old relation virtually ceased: both came together to the table of the Lord, and felt themselves brethren of one family, in striking contrast with the condition of things among their heathen neighbors as expressed in the current proverb: "As many enemies as slaves."^{*} That there actually were such cases of fraternal fellowship, like that which St. Paul recommended to Philemon, we have the testimony of Lactantius, at the end of our period, who writes in his Institutes,† no doubt from life: "Should any say: Are there not also among you poor and rich, servants and masters, distinctions among individuals? No; we call ourselves brethren for no other reason, than that we hold ourselves all equal. For since we measure everything human not by its outward appearance, but by its intrinsic value, we have, notwithstanding the difference of outward relations, no slaves, but we call them and consider them brethren in the Spirit and fellow-servants in religion." The same writer says: "God would have all men equal.‡ . . . With him there is neither servant nor master. If he is the same Father to all, they are all with the same right free. So no one is poor before God, but he who is destitute of righteousness; no one rich, but he who is full of virtues."

Such views must lead us to presume, that even in this early period instances of actual manumission among Christian slave-owners were not rare. And we read, in fact, in

* Totidem esse hostes, quot servos.—Seneca, Ep. 47.

† Lib. v. c. 15 (ed. Fritzsche. Lips. 1842, p. 257).

‡ Inst. v. 14 (p. 257): Deus enim, qui homines generat et inspirat, omnes aequos, id est pares esse voluit; eandem conditionem vivendi omnibus posuit; omnes ad sapientiam genuit; omnibus immortalitatem spondit, nemo a beneficiis coelestibus segregatur. . . Nemo apud eum servus est, nemo dominus; si enim cunctis idem Pater est, aequo jure omnes liberi sumus.

the Acts of the martyrdom of the Roman bishop Alexander, that a Roman prefect, Hermas, converted by that bishop, in the reign of Trajan, received baptism at an Easter festival with his wife and children and twelve hundred and fifty slaves, and on this occasion gave all his slaves their freedom and munificent gifts besides.] So in the martyrology of St. Sebastian, it is related that a wealthy Roman prefect, Chromatius, under Diocletian, on embracing Christianity, emancipated fourteen hundred slaves, after having them baptized with himself, because their sonship with God put an end to their servitude to man.* In the beginning of the fourth century St. Cantius, Cadtianus, and Cantianilla, of an old Roman family, set all their slaves, seventy-three in number, at liberty, after they had received baptism.† These traditions may indeed be doubted as to the exact facts in the case; but they are nevertheless conclusive for our purpose as the exponents of the spirit which animated the Church at that time concerning the duty of Christian masters. It was felt that in a thoroughly Christianized society there can be no room for despotism on the one hand and slavery on the other. Since the third century the manumission became a solemn act, which took place in the presence of the clergy and the congregation. The master led the slave to the altar; there the document of emancipation was read, the minister pronounced the blessing, and the congregation received him as a free brother with equal rights and privileges. Constantine found his custom already established, and African councils of the fourth century requested the emperor to give it general force.

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* Acta Sanct. Ian. tom. ii. p. 275. † Acta Sanct. Maj. tom. vi. p. 777.
[Acta Sanct. Bell. Maj. tom. i. p. 371.]

ART. VIII.—*TERTULLIAN.*

TERTULLIAN, the father of Latin theology and one of the most remarkable men of the early Church, was the son of a Roman officer and born about the middle of the second century, or fifty years after the close of the apostolic age, at Carthage in North Africa, the ancient rival city of Rome. Of his life we know nothing beyond what we can infer from his own works in connection with a few notices of Eusebius and Jerome. He received a liberal education ; his writings manifest an extensive acquaintance with historical, philosophical, polite, and antiquarian literature, and with juridical terminology and all the arts of an advocate. He seems to have devoted himself to politics and forensic eloquence, either in Carthage or in Rome. Eusebius calls him "a man accurately acquainted with the Roman laws," and many regard him as identical with the Tertillus or Tertullianus, who is the author of several fragments in the Pandects.

To his thirtieth or fortieth year he lived in heathen blindness and licentiousness. Towards the end of the second century he embraced Christianity, we know not exactly on what occasion, but evidently from deepest conviction and with all the fiery energy of his soul ; defended it thenceforth with fearless decision against heathens, Jews and heretics ; and studied the strictest morality of life. His own words may be applied to himself : "Fiant, non nascuntur Christiani." He was married, and gives us a glowing picture of Christian family life ; but in his zeal for every form of self-denial, he set celibacy still higher, and advised his wife, in case he should die before her, to remain a widow, and he afterwards put second marriage even on a level with adultery. He entered the ministry of the Cath-

olic Church first probably in Carthage, perhaps in Rome, where at all events he spent some time; but like Clement of Alexandria and Origen, he never rose above the rank of presbyter.

Some years after (about 202), he joined the puritanic, though orthodox sect of the Montanists. Jerome attributes this change to personal motives, charging it to the envy and insults of the Roman clergy, from whom he himself experienced many an indignity. But Tertullian was inclined to extremes from the first, especially to moral austerity. He was no doubt attracted by the radical contempt for the world, the strict asceticism, the severe discipline, the martyr enthusiasm, and the millenarianism of the Montanists, and expelled by the growing conformity to the world in the Roman Church. This Church, we now accurately know from the *Philosophoumena* of Hippolytus, just at that period, under Zephyrinus and Callistus, openly took under its protection a very lax penitential discipline, and at the same time, though only temporally, favored the Patravian error, which Praxeas, an opponent of the Montanists, brought to Rome. Of this man Tertullian therefore says, in his sarcastic way: He has executed in Rome two works of the devil, has driven out prophecy (the Montanistic) and brought in error (the Patravian); has turned off the Holy Ghost and crucified the Father. Tertullian now fought the Catholics, or the physicals, as he frequently calls them with the same inexorable sternness, with which he had combatted the heretics. The departures of the Montanists, however, related more to points of morality and discipline, than of doctrine; and with all his hostility to Rome, Tertullian remained a zealous advocate of the Catholic faith, and wrote, even from his schismatic position, several of his most effective works against the heretics, especially the Gnostics. Indeed, as a divine, he stood far above this fanatical sect, and gave it by his writings an importance and an influence on the Church itself, which it certainly would never otherwise have attained.

He labored in Carthage as a Montanist presbyter and an

author, and died, as Jerome says, in decrepit old age, according to some, about the year 220, according to others, not till 240. His followers in Africa propagated themselves, under the name of "Tertullianists," down to the time of Augustine in the fifth century, and took perhaps a middle place between the proper Montanists and the Catholics. That he ever returned into the bosom of Catholicism, as Hippolytus, according to the later story of Prudentius did, is an entirely groundless opinion. Nor has the Roman Church ever received him into the number of her saints and fathers.

Strange, that this most powerful defender of old Catholic orthodoxy and the teacher of the high churchly Cyprian, should have been a schismatic and an antagonist of Rome! But with the Roman spirit he united in his constitution the acerbity of the Punic character. The same bold independence played in him, in which his native city, Carthage, once resisted, through a more than a hundred years' war, the rising power of the seven-hilled city on the Tiber. But in this he truly represents the African Church, in which a similar antagonism continued to reveal itself, not only among the Donatists, but even among the leading advocates of Catholicism. Cyprian died at variance with Rome on the question of heretical baptism; and Augustine, with all his great services to the Catholic system of faith, became at the same time, through his anti-Pelagian doctrine, the father of evangelical Protestantism and of semi-protestant Jansenism.

Tertullian was a rare genius, perfectly original and fresh, but angular, boisterous and eccentric; full of glowing fantasy, pointed wit, keen discernment, polemic dexterity, and moral earnestness, but wanting in logical clearness, calm consideration, and symmetrical development. Like almost all great men he combined strong contrarieties of character. He reminds one in many respects of Luther; though the Reformer had nothing of the ascetic gloom and rigor of the African father, and exhibits in stead, with all his gigantic energy, a kindly serenity and child-like simplicity altogether foreign to the latter. Tertullian dwells

enthusiastically on the divine foolishness of the gospel and has a noble contempt for the world, for its science, and its arts, and for his own; and yet are his writings a mine of antiquarian knowledge and novel, striking, and fruitful ideas. He calls the Grecian philosophy the patriarch of all heresies, and scornfully asks: "What has the Academy to do with the Church? What has Christ to do with Plato? Jerusalem with Athens?" And yet reason does him invaluable service against his antagonists. He vindicates the principle of Church authority and tradition with great force and ingenuity against all heresy; yet when a Montanist, he claims for himself, with equal energy, the right of private judgment and individual protest. He has a vivid sense of the corruption of human nature and of the absolute need of moral regeneration; yet he declares the soul to be born Christian, and unable to find rest, except in faith. "The testimonies of the soul," says he "are as true as they are simple; as simple as they are popular; as popular as they are natural; as natural as they are divine." He is just the opposite of the equally genial, less vigorous, but more learned and comprehensive Origen. He adopts the strictest supernatural principles, and shrinks not from the "Credo quia absurdum est." At the same time he is a most decided realist, and attributes body, that is, as it were, a corporeal, tangible substantiality, even to God and the soul; while the idealistic Alexandrian cannot speak spiritually enough of God, and can conceive the human soul without and before the existence of body. Tertullian's theology revolves about the great Pauline antithesis of sin and grace, and breaks the road to the Latin anthropology and soteriology afterwards developed by his like-minded, but clearer, calmer and more considerate countryman Augustine. For his opponents, be they heathens, Jews, heretics, or Catholics, he has as little indulgence and regard as Luther. With the adroitness of a special pleader he entangles them in self-contradictions, pursues them into every nook and corner, overwhelms them with arguments, sophisms, apothegms, and sarcasms, drives them

before him with unmerciful lashings, and almost always makes them ridiculous and contemptible. His polemics every where leave marks of blood. His style is exceedingly characteristic, and corresponds with his thought. It is extremely condensed, abrupt, laconic, sententious, nervous, figurative, full of hyperbole, sudden turns, legal technicalities, African provincialisms, or rather antiquated Latinisms, Latinized Greek words, and new expressions; therefore abounding also in roughness, angles, and obscurities; sometimes like a grand volcanic eruption, belching precious stones and dross in strange confusion, or like the foaming torrent tumbling over the precipice of rocks and sweeping all before it. His mighty spirit wrestles with the form, and breaks its way through the primeval forest of natures' thinking. He had to create the Church language of the Latin tongue.

In short, we see in this remarkable man both intellectually and morally the fermenting of a new creation, not yet quite set free from the bonds of chaotic darkness in clear and beautiful order.

The writings of Tertullian are mostly short; but they are numerous, and touch almost all departments of religious life. They present a graphic picture of the Church of his day. The earlier ones which were written in Greek, are entirely lost, or extant only in Latin reproductions.

Most of his works according to internal evidence, fall in the first quarter of the third century, in the Montanistic period of his life; and among these many of his ablest writings against the heretics; while on the other hand, the gloomy moral austerity, which predisposed him to Montanism, comes out quite strongly, even in his earliest productions. His works may be grouped in three classes: apologetic, polemic or anti-heretical, and ethic; to which may be added as a fourth class, the expressly Montanistic tracts against the Catholics. We can here mention only the most important.

1. Pre-eminent among the apologetic works against

heathens and Jews is the *Apologeticus*, which was composed probably in the reign of Septimus Severus, about A. D., 200, and is unquestionably one of the most beautiful monuments of the heroic age of Christianity. In this work Tertullian enthusiastically and triumphantly repels the attacks of the heathens upon the new religion, and demands for it legal toleration and equal rights with the other sects of the Roman Empire;—the first plea for religious liberty.

2. His polemic works are occupied chiefly with the refutation of the Gnostics, particularly of Marcion (A. D. 208) and the Valentinians. In the ingenious and truly catholic tract "On the Prescription of Heretics," he cuts off all errors and neologies at the outset from all right of legal contest and appeal to the Holy Scriptures which belong only to the Catholic Church as the legitimate heir and guardian of Christianity. His forensic argument, however, turns also against Tertullian's own secession; for the difference between heretics and schismatics is really only relative, at least in Cyprian's view. Tertullian afterwards asserted, in contradiction with this book, that in religious matters not custom nor long possession, but truth alone, was to be consulted.

The works "On Baptism," "On the Soul," "On the Flesh of Christ," "On the Resurrection of the Flesh," "Against Hermogenes," "Against Praxeas," are concerned with particular errors, and are important to the doctrine of baptism, to Christian psychology, to eschatology and christology.

3. His numerous practical ascetic treatises throw much light on the moral life of the early Church, as contrasted with the immorality of the heathen world. Among these belong the books "On Prayer," "On Penance," "On Patience,"—a virtue, which he extols with honest confession of his own natural impatience and passionate temper, and which he urges upon himself as well as others,—the consolation of the confessors in prison (*Ad martyres*), and the admonition against visiting theatres (*De Spectaculis*),

which he classes with the pomp of the devil, and against all share, direct, or indirect, in the worship of idols (*De idololatria*).

4. His strictly Montanistic writings in which the peculiarities of this sect are not only incidentally touched, but vindicated expressly and at large, are likewise of a practical nature, and contend, in fanatical rigor, against the restoration of the lapsed (*De pudicitia*), flight in persecution, second marriage (*De monogamia*, and *De exhortatione castitatis*), display of dress in females (*De cultu feminarum*), and other customs of the physicals, as he commonly calls the Catholics in distinction from the sectarian pneumatic. His plea, also, for excessive fasting (*De jejunis*), and his justification of a Christian soldier, who was discharged for refusing to crown his head (*De corona militis*), belong here. Tertullian considers it unbecoming the followers of Christ, who, when on earth wore a crown of thorns for us, to adorn their heads with laurel, myrtle, olive, or with flowers or gems. We may imagine what he would have said to the tiara of the pope at the height of his mediæval power.

Mercersburg, Pa.

P. S.

REV. IX.—RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. GERMANY.

IN Germany several works have appeared during the present year, which deserve attention.

DR. I. P. LANGE, Professor of Theology in the University of Bonn, has commenced, in connection with several other scholars, a Bible-work, under the title *Theologisch-homiletisches Bibelwerk*, which promises to become one of the richest and most valuable repositories of exegetical knowledge for Biblical students and especially also for ministers. It is intended to embrace gradually the whole New and Old Testaments, and to take the place of the well known extensive synopsis of Starcke, now long out of print and superseded by the labors of the present age. Each book, however, may also be bought separately. So far, the Gospel of St. Matthew only has appeared from the pen of Dr. Lange himself. It contains 458 large pages in double column, exclusive of thirty pages of introductory matter. The plan of the work combines the verbal, theological, and homiletical exegesis. First, we have a short analysis of the contents of each chapter, in small type; then a new translation of the text; next follows an explanation (*exegetische Erläuterungen*) of the several verses; then a succinct statement of the doctrines or leading theological ideas of each section from the christological point of view (*dogmatisch-christologische Grundgedanken*); and finally homiletical hints (*homiletische Andeutungen*) for the practical application of the text, including skeletons of sermons of distinguished pulpit orators. The first part betrays an immense amount of labor. Dr. Lange is well prepared for such an undertaking by his preceding works on the Life of Christ, the Apostolic Age, and on didactic theology. He has a mind of unusual fertility and freshness and is thoroughly imbued with the Christian spirit. His exuberant imagination occasionally leads him astray into fanciful views, which cannot bear close examination; but he is never dull and always stimulates, even where the more sober reader must differ from him.

There is a prospect, that this important contribution to Biblical Literature will be translated into English by a minister of the German Reformed Church in this country, already well known to the public by a number of religious works. He will have an arduous journey before him, but one which promises to secure him the gratitude of Biblical students. As far as we

know, there is no English commentary on the same plan and combining such a large amount of exegetical, doctrinal and homiletical information. If the book were not already sufficiently large, the homiletical part might be considerably improved by reference to eminent English sermonizers. But as it is, the question arises, whether a judicious condensation would not be preferable and more sure of success than a full translation.

Simultaneously with Lange's Commentary, we have the beginning of another large Bible-work by the celebrated Dr. BUNSEN, under the title : *Die Bibel, oder die Schriften des Alten und Neuen Bundes nach den überlieferten Grundtexten übersetzt und für die Gemeinde erklärt. Erster Theil. Das Gesetz*, Leipzig, 1858. It is calculated for eight large volumes. The first half of the first volume, the only one which has appeared thus far, contains a long Introduction of 394 large and splendid pages, and a new translation and commentary of the first 11 chapters of Genesis. Dr. Bunsen, formerly Prussian ambassador successively at Rome, Berne and London, and now living in literary retirement near Heidelberg, is, like Humboldt, unquestionably one of the most extensive scholars and interesting men of the age. He is almost an universal genius, having written largely on philology and criticism, Roman, Egyptian and Christian antiquities, history, philosophy, theology, politics, and passing questions of the day. The present work, on which he has been engaged more or less for the last forty years, is of such a character as necessarily to attract a great deal of attention, but also to solicit opposition from almost all the theological schools of Germany, with none of which it falls in. As we have received it but a few days ago from the kind hands of the author, it would be presumptuous to pass judgment on the merits of such a work before a more thorough examination. It is obvious, however, that from its size, its philosophical tone, and discussion of intricate, critical, hermeneutical and chronological questions, it will never be a book for the congregation according to the intention of the author, while it may have an important mission among the higher and educated classes in Germany, which have been so extensively alienated from the Christian faith in consequence of the late rationalistic apostacy. We sincerely hope it may rouse them from their

religious indifferentism and apathy and lead them to the fresh fountain of eternal truth and life.

DR. HERZOG'S *Protestant Theological Encyclopaedia* makes as rapid progress as the nature of such a work permits. The letter M is now nearly completed. But it will require, I should think, at least five more volumes to bring it to a close. The articles, as is the case in all encyclopaedical works by various authors, are of unequal merit, both as to scholarship and style. But with all its defects it is an invaluable depository of modern theological learning and will not soon be superseded.

DR. BOMBERGER'S condensed translation follows fast in the track of the original, the first volume, embracing about three of the German, being now finished. We are glad to see from the periodical press that it is so well received in all the leading denominations of the country.

The Paedagogical Encyclopaedia (Encyclopaedie des gesammten Erziehungs-und Unterrichtswesens) edited by Rector SCHMIDT of Ulm, and now in course of publication by the publishers of Herzog's work, is a very instructive and valuable book of reference to all who are interested in the subject of education in its various branches. We have received thus far four numbers of it. The first contains under "America," quite an intelligent and favorable account of the educational tendencies and institutions in the United States.

DR. S. E. OSLANDER of Göppingen in Würtemberg, has published a *Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, Stuttgart, 1858. As far as we have examined it, it is quite a thorough critical work, and one of the very best on this difficult and important epistle.

HEFELE'S *Conciliengeschichte*, is a very valuable contribution to Church history, based upon the original sources and imparting solid and reliable information. The author is a Roman Catholic of the school of Möhler, and his successor as professor at Tübingen, but well versed in the recent German Protestant theology, to which he frequently and respectfully refers. He is known by his convenient and useful edition of the Apostolic Fathers. The Conciliengeschichte embraces also a full

account of all the doctrinal and disciplinary controversies which occasioned the councils of the Church, and were decided by them. The first two volumes complete the history of the early Synods down to the fifth ecumenical Council in 553. The next two volumes which have not yet appeared, are to treat of the mediaeval councils including those of Pisa, Constance and Basel; and a fifth and last volume is to be devoted to the Council of Trent, which fixed the Roman Catholic system in its present shape and form and in its antagonism to Protestantism. Although the author is frequently biased by partiality to his own Church, still the influence of Protestant historiography is every where visible in the critical and comparatively liberal tone and in his frequent dissent from Baronius and the elder Roman Catholic historians.

From Dr. NITZSCH in Berlin we have a new work : *Academische Vorträge über die Christliche Glaubenslehre*, Berlin, Wiegandt & Grießen. 1858. It seems this venerable divine has occasionally delivered a course of lectures on Christian dogmatics to a mixed auditory of students from all faculties. The small volume before us is published from the notes taken by one of the hearers and revised by the author. It treats, therefore, the subject in more popular, yet original and vigorous style.

Dr. F. W. KRUMMACHER has commenced to issue a new series of pulpit discourses under the title "*Des Christen Wallfahrt nach der himmlischen Heimath*. Berlin. Wiegandt & Grießen. 1858.

The same publisher has issued this year a second and enlarged edition of Dr. Schaff's book on *America*, including the author's recent report to the Berlin meeting of the Evangelical Alliance on the state of religion in America.

2. AMERICA.

Essays in Biography and Criticism. By PETER BAYNE, M. A. Second Series. Boston. Gould & Lincoln. 1858.

Mr. Bayne, the successor, since 1857, of the lamented Hugh Miller, as editor of the "Edinburg Witness," the well known organ of the Free Church of Scotland, attracted first attention as an author by a work on "The Christian Life, Social and Individual," which had the good fortune of being favorably noticed by Hugh Miller in 1855. Since that time he has come

out with two series of Essays and taken rank among the ablest essayists of the rising generation. The style of literary composition which is now technically called *essay*, may be said to be peculiarly English; just as the *memoir* is peculiarly French, and the scientific *dissertation* or *treatise* is German. It may be dated from Joseph Addison, but has been brought to perfection in the present century by the leading stars of the Edinburgh Review, in its early and brightest days. We understand by it a finished literary miniature-picture of a particular subject, in its connection with the general spirit or movements of the age to which it belongs, presenting the results of thorough study without the apparatus and pedantry of scholarship in a manner at once attractive and instructive to the cultivated reader. Mr. Bayne has neither the dramatic vivacity and dazzling brilliancy of Macaulay, nor the genial grasp grasp and caustic vigor of Carlyle, nor the keen and sprightly wit of Sidney Smith, nor the penetration and illustrative imagery of Jeffrey; but a happy analytical faculty, a just and kindly appreciation of men and things, refined taste, an easy flow of language, and above all a truly Christian spirit, which animates and directs his judgment. The second series contains essays on Charles Kingsley, Lord Macaulay, Sir Archibald Alison, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Wellington, Napoleon, Plato, Christian Civilization, the Modern University, the Pulpit and the Press, and a defense of Hugh Miller's "Testimony of the Rocks." They will all repay a careful perusal.

On the *Authorized Version* of the *New Testament* in connection with some recent proposals for its revision. By RICHARD CHENNAVIX TRENCH, D. D., Dean of Westminster. Redfield. New York. 1858.

This is one of the most judicious contributions to the question of Bible revision which is now extensively discussed in England and America. The exegetical studies of the author of the "Parables" and "Miracles of the New Testament," and his researches in the philosophy of language in general, and the English language in particular, of which his books on the "Study of Words," the "Lessons in Proverbs," the "Synonyms of the New Testament," and "The English Language, past and present," furnish ample evidence, give him a right to speak on this important question with a certain degree of authority. His object in the book before us is neither to advocate nor to dissuade a revision, but mainly to discuss the actual merits and

defects of the Common English version, and thus to guard against a hasty and radical new version, as well as to prepare the way for a wise, careful and conscientious revision which should retain all the inimitable beauties of the version of 1611, and adapt it at the same time to the present state of Biblical scholarship. Such a revision, he is convinced, ought to come and will come, although not for some time yet. We may make this suggestive little volume the occasion for a separate article in some future number of the Review.

The Literary Attractions of the Bible, or a Plea for the Word of God, considered as a classic. By L^E ROY S. HALSEY, D. D. New York: Charles Scribner. 1858.

The object of this book is to exhibit the *human* beauty and greatness of the Bible, its poetry, eloquence, science and wisdom, its influence upon literature and art, legislation and morals, etc. The writer is a firm believer in the divine inspiration and infallible truth of the Scripture. But he justly thinks that the due appreciation of the human side leads to the higher point of view and forms an unbroken and cumulative argument for the superhuman character of the Bible. As the perfection of Christ's humanity, rising infinitely not only above the usual style of man, but above the wisest and best that ever lived, is an evidence of his divinity, so is also the human excellency of the Bible to be accounted for only on the ground of its being the book of God. Dr. Halsey modestly disclaims the credit of originality; but he has made a useful compilation and presented his subject in a popular style rising occasionally to eloquence and warmed by a profound reverence for that word whose "every ine is marked with the seals of high divinity, and every leaf bedewed with drops of love divine."

Mr. Scribner has recently issued an elaborate commentary of Rev. Dr. J. ADDISON ALEXANDER, of Princeton, on the *Gospel of St. Mark*, in uniform style with his recent commentary on *Acts*. It opens with a lucid introduction on the independent authority and relative completeness of the second Gospel, which he seems to regard with several German critics (Wilke, Weisse, Thiersch, Meyer, etc.,) and Mr. Smith of Jordanhill, Scotland, as the oldest. We expect to return to this valuable exegetical work more fully hereafter.

Mr. Scribner has announced as under press, a *Tabular Church History* by Prof. HENRY B. SMITH, of the Union Theol. Seminary of New York. It will contain fourteen tables, following the periods of Gieseler. From the specimen we have seen, it promises to be the very best work of the kind and will be a useful companion to a regular Church history, especially the author's revised translation of Gieseler.

The same publisher will issue, in a few weeks, SCHAFF'S *Church History of the first three centuries*, (till 311), embracing about 500 pages roy. oct. It is intended to be a separate and complete work on ante-Nicene Christianity, and at the same time the first volume of a General History of the Christian Church, which the author hopes, with God's blessing, to bring down to the present time in three or four more volumes. Of the merits of the work, he must, of course, let others speak. He will be quite satisfied, if it meet with the same favor as his *History of the Apostolic Church*.

In this connection we may be permitted to quote from the last number of the "Independent" the following notice of Mr. Scribner's new book store, 124 Grand street, corner of Broadway, N. Y. "This is the most commodious, convenient, and elegant book store in the city, surpassing even that of the Messrs. Appleton in the perfection of its arrangement, though less imposing in its *coup d'oeil*. Mr. Scribner confines himself to the sale of his own publications, and to the business of the English Publisher's Depot, in which he is associated with Mr. Charles Welford, under the name of Scribner & Co. . . In the English department may be found the latest issues of nearly all the prominent publishers of Great Britain. It is the aim of Mr. Scribner and Welford to make their establishment a centre of Literary Intelligence." We take the liberty of adding, from our own recent experience, that Mr. Welford has perhaps a better knowledge of English bibliography than any publisher or bookseller in America.

P. S.

A Plea for the Lord's Portion of a Christian's Wealth, in Life by Gift; at Death by Will. Chambersburg, Pa.: M. Kieffer & Co.

A neat little volume of 128 pages on the subject of Christian Benevolence, prepared and issued by a Committee appointed for this purpose by the Synod of the German Reformed Church.

It is addressed particularly to "ministers and members whom God has blest with wealth;" not so much to the poor, therefore, as to the wealthy; and for the simple reason that the poor belonging to the Church of Christ, not beset by the same temptations to hoarding and sinful indulgence, are generally ready to contribute according to their ability. As the title imports, it aims at setting forth the duty of the wealthy to contribute freely and systematically during life, and by will at death. The discussion is thorough and Scriptural; the style good; the appeal direct, well sustained and forcible; and the ruling *animus* of the book breathes the lofty spirit of the New Testament.

This little book on the "Lord's Portion" merits a careful perusal by all to whom the Lord has entrusted earthly goods—by all particularly who desire to be conscientious and faithful stewards of the manifold favors of God. Ministers and elders of the Church should use their influence to give the work a general circulation.

E. V. G.

TO THE READER.

The undersigned must apologize for taking up so much room himself in the present number. The simple reason is the want of contributions from others, and the unexpected absence of Dr. Gerhart from home, which made it necessary for the second editor, at a late hour, to fill out the October number.

With the coming year the financial management of the Review, as will be seen from a notice on the cover, passes from the hands of the Rev. Prof. Apple, who has devoted much time and disinterested labor to it for several years past, into those of the Rev. George B. Russell of Pittsburg, Pa., to whom, therefore, all business letters should be directed hereafter.

In the editorial management no change will take place for the present. The undersigned, believing that he had contributed, as editor of the *Kirchenfreund*, his full share to theological journalism, and desirous of concentrating his literary labors on works already commenced or projected, has entered with considerable reluctance into the co-editorship of the Review. But he has seen no reason thus far to regret that he yielded in this case to the urgent request of friends, and is willing to keep his post at least for another year.

He desires to return, in this public way, his cordial thanks to all who have kindly contributed to this periodical during his editorial connection with it, and would respectfully bespeak their continued favors, as well as the patronage of all its friends, that the Mercersburg Review may be continued, both as an organ of the theological and literary life of the German Reformed Church in this country, and as a medium for the free and independent discussion of important questions connected with the general interests and progress of Protestantism, especially those which relate to the doctrine and mission of Christ and his Church.

Mercersburg, Oct. 1, 1858.

P. S.

